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ON THE

EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT,

IN ITS RELATION TO

GOD AND THE UNIVERSE.

BY THOMAS W. JENKYN.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION,

By Rev. Daniel L. Carroll,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds.—JUD. xix, 30.

Jurarem—me et ardere studio VERI reperiendi, et ea sentire, quæ dicerem; qui enim possum non cupere VERUM invenire, cum gaudeam si SIMILE veri quid invenerim?—Cic. Acad. Quæst. iv, 20.

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TO THE

REV. J. PYE SMITH, D. D.

THEOLOGICAL TUTOR IN THE OLD COLLEGE, HOMERTON.

DEAR SIR,—I count myself happy in having this opportunity, of publicly testifying the high esteem and veneration in which I hold your character as a valued Friend, and a distinguished Theologian.

It is among the goodliest allotments of my heritage, that I was placed under your theological instructions, and introduced into the circle of your friendship.

As my attendance on your Divinity Lectures, and my perusal of your polemical writings, have had no small share in directing and forming my mind to the study of the Christian Propitiation, I feel bound, in affection and duty, to present to you the first cluster that has ripened under your training.

God has raised you to a high elevation in English theology. In that eminent position, may God long preserve you, the amiable expounder, and the able defender, of the SACRIFICE and the TESTIMONY of Christ.

Accept of this volume as an expression of the deep and sincere affection with which

I am your attached Friend,
And obedient Servant,

T. W. JENKYN.

Oswestry, Nov. 5, 1833.

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INTRODUCTION

BY REV. DANIEL L. CARROLL,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

The expiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, when "through the Eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God" is a subject whose investigation is destined to engross the interest and tax the talent of the church extensively before her millennium. This is the great centre of that remedial system which God is carrying forward over the moral ruins of our world. "Christ *crucified*" has been, and ever will be to the end of time the power of God and the wisdom of God to every one that believeth. Contemplating the atonement in that celestial prominence in which the oracles of God have placed it, it seems amazing that the mind of the church should so frequently be diverted from it to subjects merely speculative, or to themes of "doubtful disputation." It is matter of deep regret that the time and thought, the patience and labor, the intellectual acumen and strength which in ages past have been employed on trifles or worse than wasted, had not been concentrated on those wonders of the crucifixion which "angels desire to look into." It is not less a matter of painful surprise and regret that many of the modern in-

vestigations respecting the atonement have been conducted with the purpose of *limiting* its nature and of degrading it to the littleness of a mere commercial transaction. The doctrine which confines the sacrifice of Christ in all its relations to the literal payment of the debt of the elect is, we humbly conceive, highly anti-scriptural and insulting to the Son of God. The influence of this dogma is to embarrass the ministry in the proclamation of mercy—to rob the scheme of redemption of that "glory that excelleth," and to cripple that expansive benevolence which aims at the salvation of the world *because* it believes that through the blood of Christ's propitiation "*the world might be saved.*" Strange that such a doctrine should be identified, in the minds of some, with the essence of all orthodoxy. But this illusion will not continue long. God, in training the intellect of his church to those views of truth befitting her era of coming glory, will teach it to break over the inclosures which man's wisdom has reared round the atonement, and to contemplate that doctrine in the light of revelation alone, unclouded by human theory. The Church must and will be brought back to *primitive* conceptions on this great subject. No one who has carefully studied the doctrinal parts of the New Testament, can fail to be convinced that the unparalleled success of the gospel in the first age of Christianity, was greatly owing to the enlarged and exalted views which the apostles entertained of the sacrifice of Christ, as "a propitiation *for the sins of the whole world.*" They felt that they had a remedy to propose for human acceptance amply adequate to the ruins of the apostacy. They saw in the blood of the cross a balm for the healing of *all* the nations. This in their minds constituted the great master-thought respecting the atonement. This created that mighty impulse which bore the great apostle of the Gentiles along

in the travels and toils and perils of his extraordinary career. The gratitude and responsive love awakened in the hearts of apostles and primitive Christians, by contemplating the stupendous love and mercy of God, in the full provisions of the atonement for a dying world, became the great master-passion of their souls. This kindled the quenchless fires of their zeal and "burnt in upon" their hearts the invincible purpose of living for the conversion of the world. For the atainment of this great object yet held out to the hopes and efforts of the church, we must return to apostolic views and emotions in reference to the atonement. Sanctified genius must yet learn to "glory in nothing save in the cross of Christ Jesus the Lord." The whole intellect of the church must gather round Calvary and tax its gigantic energies in grasping the magnitude and tracing the relations of that one offering for sin which the Son of God made of himself there.

It is no presumption to suppose that that transaction may have influences and bearings on the character and destinies of the race, which have hitherto been but partially understood and as partially applied in the great work of saving the world. Is it an unreasonable conjecture that there are yet some "hidings of the power" of eternal love in the atonement, which shall be sought and found and brought out in their sway upon the hearts of apostate men for their salvation—that there are yet the reserved glories of infinite mercy there, which some mind favored of God shall discover and disclose to the world when its vision is sufficiently pure and piercing to behold them? Is it too much to hope for, that under the power of that Spirit which "searcheth all things, yea, *the deep things of God*" the intellect of the church will yet be trained to see the atonement of Christ in a new and celestial light, and in new and mightier relations to earth and to the universe? It

must be admitted that the system of revealed truth is complete, and that no new disclosures of inspiration are to be expected But this does not prove that the human mind has yet contemplated all the truths of that system in all their great and more extended relations. The system of the material creation was as perfect when God spake it into being and pronounced it very good as it is now. And like the system of revealed truth, its obvious facts and their immediate relations were known as soon as there was an intelligent mind on earth to contemplate them. But this does not prove that Adam, Noah, or Abraham was as great an astronomer as Isaac Newton, or that either of them ever saw or understood many of the laws and relations of matter which were perfectly familiar to this prince of science.

The primary and fundamental truths of revealed religion, and their proximate relations have been known to men in all ages—and being necessary to salvation, must be such in their very nature that the great mass of mind can comprehend them without learned effort. But this does not prove that there are not more remote and far-reaching relations of divine truth, which are legitimately the subject of investigation and discovery through every age till the end of time.

There is an obvious difference between a revealed fact and the *relations* of that fact to other facts or things in the universe. The fact itself may be manifest to the understanding of a child. The relations of that fact may be sufficiently great and extended to employ the powers of an angel.

Now whether we consider the atonement in its *origin* in the counsels of the trinity, and in the depths of infinite and everlasting love, or as *a measure* of that moral government which Jehovah will extend over man and other in-

telligences through eternity, it seems reasonable to suppose that it must have numerous, widely extended, and remote relations.

The characteristic peculiarity of this work is the extended view which the author takes of *the relations* of the atonement. The volume presents nothing striking or original in any other respect; nay, it contains many remarks on the subject of divine justice, law, penalty, moral government, &c. which to most American readers will appear quite common, compared with the comprehensive and masterly discussions of the same topics by our own Edwards, Bellamy, Dwight, Beecher, and others. Still, as a treatise on the grand *relations* of the atonement, it is a book which may be emphatically said to contain "the seeds of things"—the elements of mightier and nobler combinations of thought respecting the sacrifice of Christ than any modern production. A mere glance at the titles of some of the chapters will amply attest the truth of this remark. Nor are they empty titles. They are sustained from the commencement to the close of the various chapters which they characterize, by highly original and dense trains of thought, which make the reader feel that he is holding communion with a mind that can "mingle with the universe."

The author, in tracing these vast and sublime relations, takes occasion to refute triumphantly the dogma of a limited atonement, and to establish with an irresistible force of conviction the opposite doctrine. We consider this volume as setting the long and fiercely agitated question of the extent of the atonement, completely at rest. Posterity will thank the author till the latest ages for his arguments and illustrations, founded on the following propositions respecting the atonement. "The extent of the atonement illustrated by its relation to the divine attri-

butes." "If the atonement consists in the substitute's suffering the identical penalty due to a limited number of offenders, and in suffering it for that number only, to the exclusion of all the lost. Such an atonement mars the character of every attribute of God." It "dishonors the infinite *veracity* of God,"—it "exhibits infinite *mercy* as inadequate, restrained, and exclusive,"—"infinite *justice* has its glory obscured by a commercial and limited atonement." "The hypothesis of a commercial and limited atonement destroys the glories of free and sovereign grace in dispensing pardon." "The honors of infinite benevolence are disparaged by this commercial redemption." "The wisdom of God shows us all the dishonor which a commercial and limited atonement, casts upon the other perfections of God." These in the hands of our author are not bare assertions or meagerly substantiated propositions. They are confirmed by a train of clear, cogent argument as we think absolutely irrefutable.

His next topic is, "The extent of the atonement explained by the character of the divine purposes." We would recommend all those who have adduced the decree of election and other divine purposes as their great argument for a limited atonement to read this Sec. of Chap. IV. and show us the fallacy of the author's reasoning. When he has done this he may then take hold of the following proposition and dispose of it—"The extent of the atonement illustrated by its relation to the universe." After a careful perusal, let any gainsay it who can. He goes on to state and prove these remaining propositions—"A limited atonement inconsistent with a moral government"—"A limited atonement inconsistent with the providence of God"—"Particular atonement inconsistent with the substituted sufferings of Christ"—"The universality of the atonement consistent with the limited promulgation

of the gospel." On all these propositions a candid perusal will convince the religious community, that the author has opened a vast and rich mine of thought connected with the atonement, where the improved mental machinery of the age may ply its powers with prodigious effect. We rejoice that the book is to be republished in this country. We believe that its influence on the opinions of theological students and ministers will be great and salutary beyond computation. The grandeur with which it invests the Son of God, and the glories of his sacrifice which it displays as shedding their light and influence over the whole extended empire of Jehovah, give it an extraordinary claim upon the attention of the reading community. We think it not improbable that this volume will prove a star in the east to guide "the wise men" again to the incarnate suffering Redeemer, and to bring back the genius of this apostate world to pay its homage and yield its richest contributions of thought to the theme of the crucifixion D. L. C.

ON THE

EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE NATURE AND DESIGN OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE atonement which the Lord Jesus Christ by his death gave to the divine government, is a subject of stupendous interest to every sinner. It concerns him personally: it is a matter of life and death to him. No man can be innocently indifferent to the doctrine of the gospel concerning the atonement; and by its dignity and authority, it deserves and demands the most serious consideration of every man who hears of it.

It is extremely difficult to make this subject plain to a careless inquirer, or to a captious disputant. Should this book be read by a convicted offender, whose eternal life depends on the answer to the question, "How shall a man be just with God?" I should regard the task of unfolding this doctrine as comparatively easy. On the contrary, should the offender think lightly of the evil of his offence, he will care proportionably little about the means of his acquittal. It is always found true, that slight thoughts of the atonement of Christ, engender and foster slight thoughts of the evil of sin.

"WHAT IS AN ATONEMENT?" This is a question rarely if ever pondered, either by those who deny the atonement as an absurdity, or by those who wrest it for licentiousness. Yet a distinct and well-defined conception of the nature of an atonement is indispensably necessary to a successful inquiry into the design, the aspect, and the extent of the atonement. What, then is an atonement? An atonement is any provision introduced into the administration of a government, instead of the infliction of the punishment of an offender—any expedient that will justify a government in suspending the literal execution of the penalty threatened—any consideration that fills the place of punishment, and answers the purposes of government as effectually, as the infliction of the penalty on the offender himself would; and thus supplies to the government just, safe, and honorable grounds for offering and dispensing pardon to the offender.

This definition or description may be more concisely expressed thus; ATONEMENT is an expedient substituted in the place of the literal infliction of the threatened penalty, so as to supply to the government just and good grounds for dispensing favors to an offender.

Let this definition of atonement be fairly tried by the usage of the word in the administration of civil justice; and let it be compared with the sense of all the passages of holy scripture in which the word, or the doctrine of the atonement is introduced. It will not wrest one text of Scripture: it will not torture one doctrine of Christian theology.

In the administration of a government, an atonement means something that may justify the exercise of clemency and mercy, without relaxing the bands of just authority. The head of a commonwealth, or the supreme organ of government, is not a private person, but a *public officer*. As a private person he may be inclined to do many things which the honor of his public office forbid him to do. Therefore, to reconcile the exercise of his personal disposition and of his public function, some

expedient must be found, which will preserve the honor of his government in the exhibition of his clemency and favor. For want of such an expedient, a public organ of government must often withhold his favors. This principle is practically adopted every day in the discipline of children in a family, as well as in the civil administration of public justice.

I will endeavor to illustrate this definition of an atonement by two remarkable instances, one borrowed from the holy scriptures, and the other from profane history.

The first instance is that of Darius and Daniel, in Dan. vi. 14, 15, 16. King Darius had established a royal statute, and made a firm decree, and signed the writing, that whosoever should ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of the king himself, should be cast into the den of lions. Daniel, one of the children of the captivity of Judah, was found to be the first offender. "Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, 'Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and the Persians is, That no decree or statute which the king establisheth may be changed.' Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the lions' den."

Here is an instance of an absolute sovereign setting his heart on the deliverance of an offender, and laboring to obtain it; and yet prevented from exercising his clemency, by a due sense of the honor of his government. Could not Darius at once have *pardoned* Daniel? Yes: Darius could as a private person forgive any private injury; but he could *not* as a public officer, privately forgive a public offence against the authority of his office. Could not Darius have *repealed* the law which he himself had made? Yes: but not with honor to the laws of the Medes and Persians. Such a repeal would have shewn egregious fickleness in him; and such a fickleness and uncertainty in the administration of his

government might encourage any disaffection or treason among the presidents, princes, and satraps of the provinces. Could not Darius have *banished* or *silenced* all the abettors of the law, and enemies of Daniel? Yes: but such a deed would have told his folly, imbecility, and injustice, in every province of his empire: his *folly*, in enacting a law which he found it unreasonable to execute; *imbecility*, in want of due authority in his own council, and of due firmness to enforce his own edict; and his *injustice*, in protecting and favoring an offender at the expense of the loyal supporters of the throne.

What, then, is to be done? Cannot some means be found which will enable the king to keep the honor of his public character, and yet save Daniel? No: the king labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. He pondered, and thought, and devised about a way to deliver him honorably, but failed. Consequently, the very personage who had set his heart to deliver him, with his own lips "commanded" that Daniel be brought forth, and thrown into the den of lions.

Why was this done? Not because the king had no mercy in him, but simply and only, because no *expedient* could be found which would at once preserve the honor of the government, and allow the exercise of clemency towards the offender. Daniel was cast into the lions' den merely because *no atonement* was found to vindicate and to "shew forth" the public justice of the governor in his deliverance. Here, then, is an instance of mercy being withheld, merely from the want of an honorable ground or medium for *expressing* it.

The other instance to which I alluded, is from profane history. In this instance also there was a strong disposition to save the offender, and yet there was a difficulty, almost insurmountable, in the way of his honorable acquittal. His deliverance, however, was devised by a wise expedient introduced by the gover-

nor himself. I allude to the case of the son of Zaleucus.*

Zaleucus, the king of the Locrians had established a law against adultery, the penalty of which was, that the offender should lose both eyes. The first person found guilty of this offence, was the king's own son. Zaleucus felt as a father towards his own son, but he felt likewise as a king towards his government. If he, from blind indulgence, forgive his son, with what reason can he expect the law to be respected by the rest of his subjects? and how will his public character appear in punishing any future offender? If he repeal the law, he will brand his character with dishonor—for *selfishness*, in sacrificing the public good of a whole community to his private feelings; for *weakness*, in publishing a law whose penalty he never could inflict; and for *foolishness*, in introducing a law, the bearings of which he had never contemplated. This would make his authority for the future a mere name.

The case was a difficult one. Though he was an offended governor, yet he had the compassion of a tender father. At the suggestion of his unbribed mercy, he employed his mind and wisdom to devise a measure, an expedient through the medium of which he would save his son, and yet magnify his law, and make it honorable. The expedient was this, The king himself would lose one eye, and the offender should lose another. By this means, the honor of his law was preserved unsullied, and the clemency of his heart was extended to the offender. Every subject in the government when he heard of the king's conduct, would feel assured that the king esteemed his law very highly; and though the offender did not suffer the entire penalty, yet the clemency shewn him was exercised in such a way, that no adulterer would ever think of escaping with impunity. Every reporter or historian of the fact

* An account of Zaleucus is found in Ælian, V. H. 2, 37. Val. Max. i. 2, 6. Cic. ad Attic. 6. 1.

would say, that the king spared not his own eye, that he might spare his offending child with honor. He would assert that this sacrifice of the king's eye, completely demonstrated his abhorrence of adultery, and high regard for his law, as effectually, as if the penalty had been literally executed upon the sinner himself. The impression on the public mind would be that this expedient of the father was an atonement for the offence of the son, and was a just and honorable ground for pardoning him.

Such an expedient in the moral government of God, the apostles asserted the death of Christ to be. They preached that all men were "condemned already,"—that God had "thoughts of peace, and not of evil" towards men,—that these thoughts were to be exercised in such a manner, as not to "destroy the law," and that the medium or expedient for doing this, was the sacrifice of his ONLY SON as an atonement to public justice for the sin of men.

The sufferings of the Son of God were substituted in the room of the execution of the penalty threatened to the offender. The atonement in the death of Christ is not a literal enduring of the identical penalty due to the sinner, but it is a provision or an expedient introduced instead of the literal infliction of the penalty; it is the substitution of another course of suffering which will answer the same purposes in the divine administrations as the literal execution of the penalty on the offender himself would accomplish.

Had Darius found any person willing to be thrown into the lion's den instead of Daniel, and literally to bear the penalty threatened, this could never have been deemed an atonement to the laws of the Medes and the Persians. These laws had never contemplated that the offender should have the option of bearing the penalty, either in person or by his substitute. It would have been a much more likely atonement to the laws, if one of the presidents of the provinces, one high in the esteem of the king, one concerned for the honor of

the government, and one much interested in Daniel, had consented, either to lose his right hand on a public scaffold, or to fight with a lion in an amphitheatre, for the sake of honorably saving Daniel.

Atonement is not an expedient contrary to law, but above law. It is introduced into an administration, not to execute the *letter* of the law, but to preserve "the spirit and the truth" of the constitution. The death of Christ is an atonement for sin. It is a public expression of God's regard for his law; and it is an honorable ground for showing clemency to transgressors. That the atonement is a doctrine of the word of God, is evident from the fact that it suggests itself to every unprejudiced reader of the New Testament,—that in the churches which used the original text only it was never deemed a heresy, and that one end of the modern opponents of it in constructing an "Improved Version of the New Testament" has been to exclude it. The simple and unbending language of the scriptures speak of Christ as an atoning Mediator, "whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation*, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins past through the forbearance of God, to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, AND the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 25.

If this representation of the death of Christ be correct and scriptural, it must be evident that the atonement of the Son of God did not consist in suffering literally the identical penalty, or the identical amount of penalty due to a certain number of offenders for a certain number of offences. The atonement of Christ is represented by men sometimes, as if he would have had to suffer more, had there been more to be saved, or less, had there been fewer to be saved. Sometimes also another aspect is given to the atonement, as if God saved a number of offenders in proportion to value received for them in obedience and suffering from their substitute.

Here, let us pause. Let us bethink ourselves, and seriously consider—"Is this the atonement of the scrip-

tures." *This* invests with the meanest calculating mercenariness a moral transaction of the utmost grandeur in the universe. By supposing the literal infliction of the threatened punishment on the substitute, it exalts the condemned suppliant into a presumptuous claimant; it excludes grace from the dispensation of pardon, and, in fact, annuls the idea of an atonement. By maintaining the certain salvation of *so many* persons, in consideration of *so much* suffering endured for them, and for them only, it prescribes dimensions to the mercy that "loved the world;" it makes the salvation of some offenders utterly impossible; and it destroys the sincerity of that universal call which summons all men to "receive the atonement."

This commercial atonement accumulates the obligations of the elect to the Son, at the expense of their obligations to the Father; for he has granted no boon without being compensated for it. And it completely darkens the justice of the "sorer punishment" which shall befal the rejecters and despisers of salvation. By its absurdity, it furnishes the most plausible apology for Socinianism, or any other system of opposition to the doctrine of an atonement: and by its boldness it unbridles all the licentiousness of Antinomianism. The character and aspect of such a notion of atonement shew that it is not the atonement of the scriptures.

It is a suspicious circumstance in any system of theology, when it is so promulgated as to excite objections and controversies which were not raised by the ministry of the apostles. We can clearly ascertain the theological doctrines of the apostles, partly from their direct assertions, and partly from their replies to the objections proposed by their adversaries. If the apostle shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God, and if this whole counsel was delivered unto us, when the inspired code of theology was completed, we have no safe ground to expect the revelation of any new doctrine of Christianity.

When the announcing of our theological doctrines raises the same objections as those to which the apostles

have already replied, we may safely conclude that such a statement of the doctrine is apostolical. But if we, by any of our theological statements excite objections which the apostles did not excite, we have good grounds not only for being very jealous of such a doctrine, but for a total and immediate renunciation of it.

The doctrines of the apostles did excite controversies about predestination to life, the sovereignty of divine influences, the accountableness of a sinner to the moral law, the reality of the atonement, &c.; but there is not the remotest allusion to any controversies having been raised concerning the EXTENT of the atonement. Some of the Jews, indeed, at one time had doubts about the universal calling of the Gentiles; but those doubts arose from their views of the Mosaic covenant, and not from considerations relative to the intrinsic aspect and design of the atonement.

The apostles declare, in language the most distinct and unequivocal, that the death of Christ was a ransom for all, and a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that he tasted death for every man, and that God, consequently, was in him reconciling the world unto himself. Yea, they openly declared that persons who denied or renounced the Lord who had bought *them*, would, notwithstanding, meet with a damnation that slumbered not. Yet this universal aspect of the atonement is never supposed to have shocked the minds, or clashed with the doctrines of the primitive churches. In all the apostolical writings, there is no hint given that the churches had any narrow views of the design of the death of Christ; and no reply is given to any objection which might imply a misapprehension of such an unshackled, unqualified, and unlimited testimony concerning the extent of the atonement.

That the apostles represented Christ to have died "for the church," "for his people," &c., does not in the least weaken this position; for what is true of the whole of mankind, must be true of a part; and such a language

expresses the actual *result* of the atonement, and not the nature, aspect, and adaptation of it.

It is, then, evident that the advocates of a limited atonement, and the inspired apostles, do not publish their message in the same style. Do the advocates of a limited atonement ever cheerfully and fearlessly declare, that "Christ died for all?" and that his death is "a propitiation for the sins of the whole world?" Do they not hesitate to use such unmeasured phraseology? Do they not call sinners to repentance, rather on the ground that *perhaps* they are elected, than on the firm and broad basis of a "ransom for all?"

The apostles, on the contrary, understood their commission to be general and indiscriminate for "every creature:" so they received it from Him, who laid the foundation of such an extensive ministration, by "tasting death for every man." Accordingly, they proceeded on their commission to preach the gospel to "all the world." They did not square their message by any human systems of theology, nor measure their language to the lines of Procrustean creeds. They employed a dialect that would traverse the length and breadth of the world. They did not tremble for such an unreserved exhibition of the ark and the mercy seat. They could not bring themselves to stint the remedy prepared and intended to restore a dying world; nor could they cramp the bow lighted up in the storm that threatened all mankind.

To avoid some of the absurdities of a commercial atonement, its advocates say, that it was *sufficient for all*. This then is conceding the point, that the particularity of the atonement consists, not in its nature and aspect, but in its application. The phrase "sufficient for all," should be well weighed. If the atonement be "sufficient for all," sufficient *for what* is it? It was, no doubt, sufficient to shew that the throne and government of God were quite guiltless in the intrusion of sin, and that sin is a wrong, and an evil of tremendous malignity. But is the atonement suffi-

cient to justify the government in the salvation of every man, provided such a salvation would take place? Is the atonement sufficient to demonstrate to all the offenders of the world the evil of their revolt, and the inexcusableness of persisting in it? Is the atonement sufficient to shew, that if any sinner perished, he perished not through any deficiency in the provision made for his salvation? In a word, is the atonement sufficient to justify a free, a full, and a sincere offer of cordial acceptance to every applicant at the throne of mercy? If the atonement be not sufficient for these purposes, in what senses can it at all be sufficient for men, and for all men? And if it be actually sufficient for these purposes, let it be preached as such; let it be fearlessly exhibited in its true character.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE PERSON OF THE SON OF GOD.

If a peasant offend or injure a peasant, a plebeian umpire might settle the difference between them. If he offend a magistrate in the exercise of his office, the plebeian umpire will not be competent to treat in his behalf: he must have a daysman of a higher grade. If he offend the king, by treason or rebellion, the one and the other of these umpires would be inadequate to interpose for him: some person high in rank, or official dignity, would alone be thought suitable and competent to such an undertaking.

Should it be proposed to a government that a prisoner, convicted of a high offence, should be set at liberty, at the instance and intercession of another, that is, *for the sake* of another person, it is natural to suppose, that among all the members and friends of the government there would be a general inquiry—*who* and *what* was that person? The following circumstances would require a very satisfactory explanation: What is his rank in the state? What is the nature of his connection with the offender? What is his character in the estimation of the government? What measure will he substitute instead of the offender's punishment? Why does he interfere? How does the king regard such an interference?

The high rank of such a person in the state is of consequence in such a transaction, because such alone would be competent to treat with the king. With such only could the king treat on such a subject without

lowering his dignity. The interference of such a personage would draw public attention to the magnitude of the offence. If the personage were nearly related to the king, and obliged to sustain some great inconvenience, humiliation, or hardship by his interference, it would shew that the king did not dispense his pardons, except on good, wise, and worthy grounds.

In such a transaction regard must also be had to the kind of connection or relationship in which the intercessor stands to the offender. There would be no propriety in dispensing pardon at the instance of a stranger, utterly unconnected, either by neighborhood, office, or kindred with the offender. There is, however, a congruity in shewing favor, *cæteris paribus*, at the instance of a person in some way related to the peculiar circumstances of the offender: say, the Home Secretary of State, the Lord Lieutenant of the county, the Magistrate for the district, the Minister of the parish, the Colonel of a regiment, &c. The interference of such a person shews that he is interested in the welfare of the district where the offence was committed. It draws the attention of that particular district to the heinousness of the crime. His respectability is a pledge that just authority and the public good will not be injured by granting pardon; and it secures honor, love, and esteem to the interposer, as the means of conveying the pardon; and through him, reverence and attachment to the government that granted it.

He who would interpose in such an affair must be a person possessing great private worth, and weight of character in the estimation of the government. It would lower and sully the dignity of any government to treat with one who had been a sharer in the crime, or who thought slightly of it. In treating with a person of worth and character, the government would shew that the throne was quite clear of contributing to the offence, or of conniving at it,—that it did not regard the offence as a trifle,—that it was not reluctant to administer mercy,

when practicable with honor and safety,—that its pardon was so dispensed as not to afford the slightest encouragement to the crime,—and that the liberation of the offender came entirely from the sovereign prerogative of the throne, though through the intercession or for the sake of another. In this way the offender could not boast of his case as deserving pardon; nor could his compeers in guilt boast of his release as a triumph over righteousness.

In such a dispensation of pardon, it is not enough that the character of the government appear honorable, but the interests of it must also be safe. We may therefore suppose one of the friends of the government to rise and say,—"It is well known that a law without a penalty is only an advise, a mere recommendation; and annexing a penalty without executing it when required, makes government a mere name. If the punishment in this case be cancelled, what provision will the offender's friend substitute instead of it, that will secure the ends of good government. For though the letter of the law be not executed, yet the spirit of it ought to be preserved that mercy may not clash with public justice."

Another friend might rise and say,—"It should be remembered that the illustrious person who interferes in this affair, is a friend to the government, as well as a friend to the offenders, and withal, is no friend to the offence. He is high in rank and in official dignity, and his character is unblemished. He has suffered much pain and anguish for the offenders, and in this undertaking, has borne great fatigue and expense, as well as the hazard of his good name. He now pledges that his private worth in his own district, his rank in the state, his nearness to his sovereign, and his high office, will guarantee that no injury shall accrue to the government by issuing forth a pardon. It has been observed that the spirit of the law might be preserved without adhering to the letter of it: I beg also to suggest that

the nearer the provision of satisfaction or atonement comes to the letter of the law, without being the literal infliction of the penalty, the more full and glorious might such an atonement appear. I am therefore instructed to say that, on this principle, as the offenders are condemned for public execution, the illustrious personage who has interposed in their behalf, will, on a given day, take their place on the scaffold, lay his head on the block, and appear again in court as the medium of conveying pardon to them."

Upon this information, all considerate persons saw that such an expedient would fully answer the ends of government, viz., to check offences and promote the public good; and these ends would be more secured by the humiliation and sufferings of such a personage, than by the infliction of the penalty on all the offenders.

There would, however, be a farther inquiry concerning this personage, viz., whether his undertaking were perfectly voluntary, and whether in his humiliation he were altogether free and unconstrained. If he were not free and voluntary, such an undertaking would be unjust, unreasonable, unbecoming, and unacceptable to the government.

Hence would arise the question, "How did the king, as the public head of the commonwealth, regard such an undertaking?" If such a spectacle were made without his approbation and appointment, it would be no expression of the king's abhorrence of the offence; it would in nowise strengthen the claims of righteous authority; it would be no satisfaction to the government, as it neither kept the letter nor preserved the spirit of the law; and it would secure no honor or esteem to the intercessor, as his undertaking was self-willed, neither appointed nor approved by any competent authority. But should the king express himself well pleased in *such* an undertaking of *such* a personage, and declare himself willing to pardon any offender who would ask forgiveness for the sake of the intercessor, such a spectacle of substituted degradation would present all the elements

of an ATONEMENT to the public justice of the government.

Let us now apply the supposed topics of the above inquiry to the person of the Son of God, the declared mediator between an offended sovereign and sinful men.

SECTION I.

The personal dignity of Christ.

What saith the scripture concerning his rank in the state, his gradation in the scale of being, the grandeur of his person?

The language of the scriptures concerning the person of Christ is never reserved, cautious, qualified, or ambiguous: it is free, open, certain, high-toned, and exulting. It never formally proves the divinity of Christ, as it never formally proves the existence of God. It ascribes unhesitatingly to Christ the same perfections, the same titles and names, the same works, and the same worship as are ascribed to the Father. If these particulars be left out of the induction of proofs for the divinity of the Father, it will be impossible to prove the Father's deity. If these particulars prove the divinity of the Father, they must, by fair sequence, prove the divinity of the Son. And if they do not prove the divinity of the Son, they do *not* prove the deity of the Father.

There is nothing in the testimony of the scripture to encourage the morbid caution and jealousy that would begrudge the honors of the Son, lest they should infringe on the honors of the Father. There is no such mean jealousy implied in any transaction between the Father and the Son, in any description given of heaven, in the design and tendency of the gospel dispensation, or in the graces of the Christian character. When the Lord Jesus Christ was at the lowest point of his humiliation, the identity of his Father's honor with his own is most clearly recognised; John xii. 28, xiii. 31, 32, xvii. 1, &c.

In heaven the same honor and power and glory are ascribed to the Lamb, as to him that sitteth on the throne. In the dispensation of the gospel of the Mediator, "Glory to God in the highest," is secured by all its provisions. The faith, and the hope, and the love of Christians, honor the grace, the mercy, and the whole paternal character of God, while they triumph in Christ, and boast and glory in his cross. In the memorials which we have of the lives and doctrines and feelings of eminent saints who excelled in the love of God, we find no dread of displeasing the Father by giving due honors to the Son; no fear of idolatry by calling, like Stephen, on the name of Jesus; nor any checking of their religious affections, saying, "hitherto shall ye go and no farther." No: they felt as free and unconstrained as the heaven they breathed. They saw that the mediatorial constitution was so arranged as to secure "many crowns" to the Mediator, without unsettling or dimming a single gem in the crown of Jehovah. They never used the cold, sophistical, and unsavory language of the modern opposers of the divinity of Christ. They knew that "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. And he that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent him." John v. 22, 23.

The divinity of the person of the Son of God is indispensably necessary to the worth, the sufficiency, and efficacy of the atonement. The grandeur of his person preserved unsullied the public honor of God in treating with a daysman for sinners. It not only *vindicated* the character of the high party proposing reconciliation, but it *magnified* that character in the whole of the transaction.

He is one high enough in rank and personal worth to draw public attention to this amazing expedient of the divine government. This was his meaning when he said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all [*men*]

to myself;" that is, "I will draw the attention and the gaze of all beings to my person and work."

The humiliation of such an exalted person gave a greater expression of God's abhorrence of sin than any other measure of his administrations. God *set* him FORTH, an atonement, to *declare* his righteousness—to make a deep and lasting impression, on all intelligences, of God's displeasure against disobedience. If Christ were a mere man, like Moses, or David, or Jeremiah, or John the Baptist, whose humiliation was no condescension, and whose obedience and sufferings were mere duty, it is impossible that his sufferings and death could have been a public expression or declaration of righteousness in forgiving sin. What would be thought of a governor summoning public attention to the equity of his government, by "cutting a dog's neck," or "offering swine's blood?" There would be no *dignity* in the medium of expressing either the justice of his law, or the majesty of his clemency. But in the divine administration, the sufferings of a person of such dignity and worth as the Son of God, supplied a dignified medium of expressing the righteousness of God, both in his abhorrence of sin, and in his exercise of clemency.

The dignity of his person is calculated to secure the esteem due from offenders to him as the Mediator. If pardon be dispensed in such a manner as is not calculated to secure honor and esteem for the person who is the medium of conveying it, and through him, for the throne which originated it, the pardon will be prejudicial to the public good. It is therefore wise to grant pardon through some person whose rank and character are calculated to secure honor and respect. The Father thought so in the appointment of his Son as Mediator, and said, "They will reverence MY SON." Had the Son been a mere man, we would have esteemed him something, as we esteem the writers of the scriptures, or the ministers of the gospel, and others who have been the means of conveying to us the knowledge of the truth. But is this the esteem which the apostles

expressed towards the person of Christ? Is such esteem at all adequate to that which the scriptures demand from us towards Christ? Is such an esteem in anywise akin to "honoring the Son even as we honor the Father?" Even a greater esteem than such is deserved and warranted by the disinterestedness of his condescension, by the amiableness of his mission, and by the magnitude of the blessings which he has procured. But, the divinity of his person tends to secure an esteem that will count all things but loss for his excellency, that will exult in him with joy unspeakable and full of glory, that will cast every crown at his feet, that will love him as "all in all." It is this alone that can fully justify the awful and tremendous anathema denounced against those who do not love him.

Above all, the Godhead of the Son unites in one person and in one administration the honors of the Mediator with those of the Governor, and blends the interests of the Savior with those of the Lawgiver. He does not exalt the Mediator by sinking the Governor. He never gives salvation in a manner calculated to beget low sentiments of his legislative character.

These considerations fully justify the deductions of Scripture, that the value and efficacy of the death of Christ as an atonement, arise from the grandeur and dignity of his person. It is the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, that cleanseth from all sin. It is He, "who being the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, that by Himself purged our sins." It is because "God spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, that he will also give unto us all things."

SECTION II.

The personal relationship of Christ to mankind.

We have already seen that there is a propriety in dispensing pardon to offenders at the instance of a person

in some way related to them, either by neighborhood, office, or kindred. The Scriptures represent the author of the great atonement for sinners as sustaining a near and intimate relationship to them.

He is related to men by *office*, having "power over all flesh," by *kindred*, being "made of a woman," and by *neighborhood*, having "tabernacled among them full of grace and truth." It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, to offer reconciliation, and to bring many sons to glory, by such a personage. "For both he that *expiates*, and they who are *expiated*, are all one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make *reconciliation* for the sins of the people." Heb. ii. 14—17.

Let this energetic and beautiful passage be applied to any good man, to any deliverer, to any prophet, to any apostle, to any martyr; or let it be read irrespective of the doctrine of atonement; and the whole becomes pointless, vague, and flimsy. The atoning priesthood of the Savior, on the contrary, gives it body and consistency, weight and edge.

The expedient of an atonement was introduced into the administration of God's moral government to "declare" the righteousness, or the public justice of God in forgiving offenders. It was therefore necessary that the atonement be "shewn forth," that is, that it be effected and published in the province where the offence was committed. An atonement effected solely by the divine nature, or by an angelic being, could not have been

"shewn forth," and made visible and tangible to mankind; consequently the author of atonement took upon him the nature of the offenders, "before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among them" An atonement thus visibly wrought, in the nature and in the province of the offenders, was calculated to produce salutary impressions on them. It would humble the offenders to have, in the moral government of which they were a province, such a decided demonstration of firm justice. It would gain their confidence, that the divine government had been devising means for the honorable exercise of mercy in their district. And it would endear to them the friendly Mediator "who though he was rich, yet for their sake became poor, that they through his poverty might be made rich."

The nature of things, and the order of society, also, seem to shew the propriety, that an atonement should be as much like the infliction of the threatened punishment, as could, under the direction of infinite wisdom, be consistent with its nature as an expedient for the suspension of the literal penalty. Hence, the illustrious Mediator assumed a nature that could sustain visible sufferings, and endure a public death, even the accursed death of the cross. By such an arrangement, the whole government has been honored in the *nature*, if not in the *persons* of the offenders. "If one died *for* all, then *did the* ALL *die*."

To pardon an offender for the sake of the relationship which a friend of ours sustains towards him, and especially to pardon *at the instance* of that friend, is a fact in common life every day. A child disobeys his father, and, through the intercession of his mother in his behalf, is forgiven. We receive a wrong at a neighbor's hand, but at the interposition of a mutual friend, we look it over. Such a circumstance often occurs also in the administration of civil government, when it is deemed honorable and safe; as when the life of a condemned criminal is spared through the petitions of the

respectable inhabitants of his native place, or when a king shews favor to any one on account of his connection with an honorable and worthy family. It was something of this kind that we see in David shewing kindness to Mephibosheth for the sake of Jonathan his father, 2 Sam. ix, 1—8. David as a king felt that there was no impropriety, danger, or dishonor, in restoring Mephibosheth to all his inheritance in such a way as this. By doing it for Jonathan's sake, it shewed that he had a high regard for Jonathan, that he considered nothing in the house of Saul as forming a claim on his clemency; and, consequently, no friends of that house could think that the king was relaxing his government, and that they might safely rebel. Thus God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself—but it is for Christ's sake. For Christ's sake, he is willing to forgive the greatest sin, to accept the vilest sinner, and to confer the greatest favor. In thus acting for Christ's sake, the boasting and the worthiness of the sinner are excluded, and the divine government is safe and honorable.

SECTION III.

The personal character of Christ; or, what is called, His active Righteousness.

Mere relationship to the offender is not a sufficient ground for a safe dispensation of pardon: the person who intercedes must have also a worth and weight of character in the estimation of the government.

When Amyntas interceded with the Athenian senate for the life of his brother Æschylus, he pleaded, by lifting up the stump of his arm, the honors which he had achieved for the government at the battle of Salamis. The senate, at the instance of a person of such character and worth, granted the pardon. It was on this principle that Abraham interceded for the sparing of Sodom and Gomorrah. His plea was the moral worth of fifty righteous souls: and the efficacy of the plea is

distinctly recognized by the Angel Jehovah. Paul also interceded with Philemon for Onesimus, by pleading his own character in the estimation of Philemon, as "being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ." This is the principle on which the Lord Jesus Christ makes intercession for transgressors, by representing to the moral governor his own infinite worth as an honorable ground for sparing them. It is as THE JUST, that he died for the unjust. It is as THE RIGHTEOUS, that he is now an advocate with the Father.

Hence we learn the design and the plan of what is called, the active obedience of Christ, in the plan of the atonement. The atonement did not consist in the death of Christ simply as death, or as the death of a person so related to the offenders, but it consisted in being *such* a death of SUCH a person. The Lord Christ would not have been SUCH a person in his sufferings and death, had not the obedience of his life preceded his agonies. The obedience of his life gave him a mediatorial character in the estimation of the divine government, so that it is an honor to the moral law to honor him.

The personal worthiness of Christ is so great and meritorious, that were we to consider him in his moral character alone, irrespectively of his divinity, it would have been no wonder, but rather, the expectation and the delight of all intelligences, if the divine government in all its authorities had interposed in the justice-hall of Calvary to vindicate and to honor such a character; to give him the "life" promised in the law that he had honored, and to confer upon him the recompense of THE JUST. But to the eternal astonishment of all the worlds of God, on that spot, he stood THE JUST for the unjust; in their stead; and voluntarily suffering *death,* not as the inflicted *penalty* of the law—because, for a person of his character, the law had no penalty—but he voluntarily suffered death as an agreed arrangement, and as a received "*commandment*" from his Father. The divine government has been more honored by the obedience of such a person, than it has been dishonored by

the disobedience of the offenders. The obedience of Christ is worthy of honor from the law, because that he himself was not worthy of death. He did not die because the law required it, for the law could not require a just person to die. He died because he had received a commandment to die from his Father—that for the sake of the dying of a person who did not deserve to die, he might pardon those who had deserved death. In such an arrangement, no subject will think lightly of the divine government, when mercy is exercised only for the sake, and in the name of one who has done so much to honor the law; but every one must, in obedience and homage, fall down before the Lamb of atonement, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us *to God* by thy blood."

SECTION IV.

The personal substitution of Christ.

A mediator interposing for offenders puts himself in their place, and, as we have seen, proposes to substitute some expedient instead of their punishment. Thus did Paul in his interposition for Onesimus. On the same principle the Lord Jesus Christ has mediated for sinners.

The sin of man is a public injury to the divine commonwealth; and for such a public injury the law has provided a public punishment. Before this public punishment can be honorably suspended, some public expedient must be substituted, that will answer the same ends. Why? The very reasons which required the original penalty to be annexed as a sanction to the law, require, in case of its suspension, that what is substituted for it should secure its ends. It is not the letter of the penalty that is essential to good government, but the influence and the ends of the penalty.

What Zaleucus substituted for the infliction of the total blindness due to his son, was honorable to his

government as a king, and to his character as a father, and was likewise full of grace to the offender. The principle of substitution is recognized, owned, and acted upon, by every man in the world. It is only the application of substitution to "the offence of the cross," that makes men stumble at it. Every victim that has ever bled on a sacrificial altar, every trouble and expense which it has cost a father to relieve and forgive an offending son, every instance of kindness shewn to one for the sake of another, every instance of giving and taking hostages among nations, every honorable exercise of a government's clemency towards offenders at the intercession of worthy characters, recognizes the principle of substitution.

The persons who deny the substitution of the atonement of Christ, nevertheless, recognize the principle of it, by asserting that the repentance of the sinner is a sufficient reason for suspending his punishment; or, in other words, they assert that the repentance of the sinner is a satisfaction to the divine government, supplying to it an honorable ground for his acquittal; and as such, to be substituted instead of his punishment. The theology of this assertion is unscriptural and bad; but its testimony to the necessity. and to the propriety of some substitutionary satisfaction, is distinct and irrefragable.

What measure, then, does the scripture reveal as the great expedient substituted in moral government, instead of the punishment due to offending mankind? This is its testimony; "All have sinned, and become short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be the propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God: to declare I say at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many." "Christ hath redeemed us

from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "Him that knew no sin, he hath made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Rom. iii, 23—26. John xx, 28. Gal. iii, 13. 2 Cor. v, 21.

The substitution of Christ was twofold,—a substitution of his person instead of the offenders; and a substitution of his sufferings instead of their punishment. By this substitution is meant, a voluntary engagement to undergo for the ends of divine government, degradation, trouble, reproach, and sufferings, that the penalty threatened by the law may *not* be executed on the offenders. Such a substitution implies no transfer of moral character, no commutation of delinquency and responsibility; the nature of things makes such a transfer and commutation impossible. This substitution, also, excludes the idea of a literal infliction upon the substitute of the identical penalty due to the offender.

It is not sufficiently borne in mind that the substitution of Christ is a measure introduced by God as the public organ of moral government, on public grounds, and for public ends, and consequently did not need to admit of the infliction of the literal punishment. Had Pythias actually died for Damon, Pythias would have endured the identical penalty due to Damon. But except in the principle of substitution, this case is not analagous to the substitution of Christ for sinners. The case of Damon and Pythias was one of mere private friendship, and not at at all of public principle; consequently it is not a case in point to illustrate the atonement of Christ! Pythias did not substitute himself for Damon from any love to the government of Dionysius, nor from a wish to express his abhorrence of the offence of Damon. Had Pythias died, Damon would have loved and honored his friend, but he never would have honored the government; for he would claim his release as a matter of justice, and never beg it as a matter of grace. After all he would hold the character of the king in utter contempt. The king did not admit of the

substitution of Pythias from love to Damon, but from desire of revenge and thirst for blood; that if the offender himself did not suffer, he would have the sufferings of his nearest and dearest friend.

Such assuredly, is not the substitution of Christ instead of sinners. For though the scriptures represent the death of Christ to be fully and literally "in the room and instead" of others, as that of Pythias would have been, yet they never connect it with private feelings of attachment, but always with the public principle of government. The substitution of Christ is more like the substitution of the person and sufferings of Zaleucus instead of the total blindness of his son, which at once manifested his high regard for his law and government, his abhorrence of the offence, his love and mercy towards the offender; while it also shewed how vain it was in any subject to expect to offend with impunity. In this substitution there was no interchange of character, no transfer of blameworthiness; the innocent was innocent still, the offender was offender still. Zaleucus was treated AS IF he had been the offender—but the character of his adulterous son was never his character. No one ever thought of calling him the adulterer; much less the greatest adulterer in the world. No: he knew no offence, though he was treated *as if* he had been an offender.

In this case the literal penalty was not executed upon the substitute. The letter of Zaleucus's law threatened total blindness, and this blindness is threatened only to the soul that sinned; yet in the substitution and sufferings of the father were found a sufficient satisfaction and atonement to the law without a literal infliction of the penalty. The substituted sufferings of the father preserved the spirit of the threatening, and were as much like it as was deemed suitable without being identical with it. It supplied safe grounds to the government for dispensing pardon. The substitute made a sufficient atonement to the law without suffering total blindness. So likewise, I think, the atonement of Christ did not

consist in bearing the identical punishment threatened to the sinner. The letter of the law never could have reached the person of Christ with its penalty; for he had personally and in his representative character kept the whole law, and consequently was honorably entitled to the *life* which the law promised. Nor could the letter of the law have met him as the substitute in the offender's room; for such a substitute was beside and above the letter of the law.

Except in the mere article of dying—of separation between soul and body, there was scarcely any thing in the sufferings of Christ the same with the original penalty threatened in the law. In the sufferings of Christ there was no pang of remorse, no consciousness of demerit, no moral and eternal death, no execration of the authority that inflicted the pains. On the contrary, there was in him a consciousness that he was JUST, and that the law did not curse him, and an assurance that God approved of him in his sufferings, as obeying his will, and doing his pleasure.

The hypothesis of a literal infliction of the penalty on the person of Christ destroys the benevolence and weakens the authority of the divine government. It supposes that the divine government would not admit of any diminution of misery, or any accession of happiness in the universe. It *must* have every iota and tittle of the misery incurred, whether by the person of the offender himself, or by his substitute. It supposes that the penalty cannot with justice be executed again on the offender himself, after it has been inflicted and exhausted on his substitute. Such views make the offender secure, presumptuous, and licentious. The substitutionary atonement of Christ does not abrogate a single claim of the law upon any sinner, until that sinner believes in Christ, and "walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit."

SECTION V.

The personal voluntariness of Christ.

To render a substitution valid, honorable, and efficacious, there must be free and perfect voluntariness in the substitute.

The atonement of Christ was to be an index to the whole operations and bearings of the mediatorial system; to point it out as a system adapted to reasonable, free, and voluntary intelligences. It was, in fact, to be a specimen of the voluntariness of the whole economy. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might have it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command have I received of my Father." John x, 17, 18.

Man was free and voluntary in the offence. God was free and voluntary in providing an atonement. The Father was free and voluntary in accepting the satisfaction, and the Spirit is free in applying salvation to sinners, dividing to every one according as he will. The sinner is free in rejecting or receiving the atonement; and the divine government is free and voluntary in forgiving the sinner; the Christian is free and voluntary in his course of obedience and holiness; his admission to heaven is entirely of free grace and unconstrained good-will; and all the employments and exercises of heaven are free and voluntary. Free, uninfluenced voluntariness is stamped on the whole transaction, and is exercised by all the parties concerned.

This voluntary principle was conspicuous in the whole life and character of the Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he *became* poor. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. His whole undertaking was an act of free choice, of perfect voluntariness; without constraint, without reluctance. When he dis-

appeared from among the Jews, who sought to kill him, it was only because "His hour" was not yet come. When the right period arrived, he said, "Father, *the hour* is come:" I am ready: ready to go to Calvary, ready to be sacrificed on an accursed altar, ready to make an atonement for the sin of man.

When this "hour" came upon him, he felt as a man, and prayed, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." Yet, this circumstance betrayed no reluctance to his work. Aversion from sufferings is an affection essential to every living creature. Such an affection is in itself innocent and sinless; without it, man would not be the subject of hope or fear, and, consequently, not a fit subject of moral government. Had the blessed Mediator been without such aversion to pain, he would not have appeared really and truly a *man:* nor would he have appeared so *great* a sufferer. He loved his Father; and in proportion as he loved his Father, he would be averse to any effects of his displeasure. His love to his Father, his innocent aversion from suffering, the nice susceptibilities of his holy frame, put his obedience to the fullest trial; yet, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth, but to say "not my will, but thine be done."

This voluntariness originated *in himself.* He emptied himself and made himself of no reputation. No one took his life from him, but he laid it down of himself. He said, "Lo, I come to do thy will." He had in himself the absolute right of self-disposal. No creature in the universe can possess this right; for his *all*, all that he is, and all that he has, is *owing* to the law. He, then, who could say of his life, "I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again," must be above law, above a creature—he must be God. This absolute right, and this unconstrained voluntariness of self-disposal, were essential to the lawfulness of his undertaking, and to the acceptance of his work, as Mediator.

Though substitution is often above law, it must never be against law. An involuntary substitution would be a measure void of all justice, and void of all grace; but voluntariness makes it just and gracious. The law of the land does not constrain any man to become a surety; but if any one voluntarily become a surety for an insolvent, the law is not unjust in allowing him to "smart for it." The law does not constrain any man to undertake great trouble and expense, and to part with a great portion of his estate to deliver a thoughtless and profligate friend or relation; but if he voluntarily do so, the law is perfectly just in letting him bear such a loss, though he never personally deserved it. The law will not force any man to enter into recognizances for the good behavior of another person; yet if he voluntarily enter on such an engagement, and his friend break the peace, no one thinks the law unjust in making the bail suffer the loss.

When Judah voluntarily substituted himself instead of Benjamin, and when Zaleucus substituted his sufferings for the punishment due to his son; no one thinks of charging such transactions with injustice and wrong. It is not right reason, nor the moral sense, but it is jaundiced prejudice, that sees any color of injustice in the voluntary substitution of Jesus Christ for sinful man. It must be something wrong, something that sees not as God seeth, that can detect injustice in the very measure which God himself, with all authority "*sets forth* TO DECLARE his righteousness." If God declares the substitution of the atonement of Christ to be a demonstration of his righteousness—and any set of men declare it to be an evidence of *injustice*, we cannot be at a loss whose declaration to receive as truth.

An involuntary substitution would, indeed, have been unjust, unreasonable, and inadmissible; therefore much of the acceptableness of the work of Christ is, in connection with the dignity of his person, ascribed to the grace, the love, and the voluntariness which he so freely

displayed in the whole undertaking. We are enriched through his poverty, because it was from mere *grace*, that he, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor. Christ hath *loved* us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. That Jesus Christ came to the world to *save* sinners was a step cordially approved of by God, and is worthy of all acceptation among mankind. "Him hath God the Father sealed" to be a Mediator; and his great atonement he has appointed to be the only medium of communication between the offenders and the throne. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

SECTION VI.

The personal sufferings of Christ.

We have now seen in the substitution of the Lord Jesus Christ all the elements essential to the reality and sufficiency of an atonement to a government: viz. dignity of person, relationship to the offender, worth of character, voluntary substitution, and appointment by the authority of the government. In this enumeration of the essential elements of atonement, I have not inserted the article of intensity of suffering, simply because, that to the atonement as an atonement, I did not consider it *indispensably* necessary. The reasons for it will be found in this section.

The reality of the atonement has, in this discussion been tried by the connection of its great elements with the person of Christ; let us now try the question of the extent of the atonement by the same test. It is self-evident that not one of these great elements of atonement could possibly be more or less than it is; from which we argue, that neither could the atonement itself be possibly more or less than it is.

The atonement of Christ is generally represented in the writings of men, and generally believed to consist in an actual suffering of the penalty due to the offenders for whom he suffered.

They who take this view of the atonement argue thus: Some offenders will eventually endure the penalty of the law themselves, as some of them already endure it now in misery. It would be unjust to inflict the penalty on the offender and on the surety; therefore the surety did not endure the penalty for those offenders who shall suffer it themselves.

This hypothesis measures the atonement by the number of the persons to be saved. This measurement is just as reasonable as measuring a king's prerogative to pardon by the number of culprits whom he has reprieved; or measuring the power of the sun to give light by the number of eyes that actually see it; or the efficacy of a medicine by the number of patients cured by it.

Many of the advocates of this view of atonement argue farther than this, and their argument arises naturally from their premises. Jesus Christ, say they, suffered the identical punishment or penalty due to the elect; this penalty is always justly proportioned to the greatness of the offence. Consequently had the elect been more or less in number, or had their individual and aggregate sins been more or less in amount of number and guilt, their surety would have had to suffer more or less for them.

This hypothesis measures the atonement not only by the number of the elect, but by the intensity and degree of the suffering endured for their sin. It adjusts the dimensions of the atonement to a nice mathematical point, and poises its infinite weight of glory even to the small dust of a balance. I need not say that the hand which stretches such lines, and holds such scales, must be a bold one. Such a calculation represents the Son of God as giving so much sufferings for value received in the souls given to him; and represents the Father as dispensing so many favors and blessings, for value received

in obedience and sufferings. This is the commercial atonement—the commercial redemption which degrades the Gospel, and fetters its ministers; which sums up the worth of a stupendous and moral transaction by arithmetic, and, with its span, limits what is infinite.

They who take this view of the atonement call it, indeed, infinite; but infinite it cannot be in the sense of *unmeasurable* or *unlimited*. The number of the elect is certainly limited, and accordingly, the sufferings of the blessed Redeemer might have been more or less, and therefore, not infinite.

I have hinted that I do not consider an infinite intensity of suffering essential to the sufficiency of the atonement. My hand trembles lest I should write a single word or syllable that would convey a low idea of the greatness of Christ's sufferings. The sufferings of Christ were indeed infinite, not simply in intensity of agony, but as they were the sufferings of a Person of infinite dignity and worth. Probably, the sufferings of some martyrs may have exceeded his, as far as the mere infliction of pain is concerned. Even the sufferings of the damned spirits are not infinite, except in duration. In reading the accounts of the sufferings of Christ we cannot avoid the supposition that they might have been greater, or they might have been less, without affecting the reality or the sufficiency of the atonement. There might have been more or fewer thorns in his crown; the scourges might have been more or fewer in number, or administered with more or less energy, without adding to the sufficiency of his satisfaction or diminishing from it.

The design of atonement is to answer the same end in the administration of government as the punishment of the offender. The end of a government in awarding punishment is not simply to give pain to the offender, but, by giving a demonstration of the government's abhorrence of the crime, to deter others from committing it. This is precisely the design of an atonement. As the infliction of pain is not indispensably

necessary to the design of punishment, neither is it necessary to the design of the atonement.

The scriptures never ascribe the efficacy of an atonement to the intensity of sufferings. In the Jewish sacrifices there is a recognition of a proportion between the costliness of the sacrifice, and the rank of the offender, as the sin of one priest required the same atonement as the sins of all the people. In such recognition there is no trace of any proportion between the magnitude of the offence, and the degree of the victim's sufferings; or between the intensity of the sufferings and the sufficiency and extent of the atonement so effected. Take a case. A family, in a given year, having no children, would present their lamb for a sacrifice; and it bled and died. Annually for ten or twenty years, they offered a "lamb for the family:" but in that time the number of sinners, and the number of sins in the family had greatly increased, possibly in aggravation as well as in number; yet the lamb of atonement was not put into greater torture than in the first year. Take another case. The people of Israel, in a given year, might be greater in population, and might have committed nationally some greater enormities than at any previous time; yet on the great day of atonement for the whole congregation, the sacrificial victim was not to die a more excruciating death than on former occasions.

When scripture and analogy are opposed to such a principle of proportion, we can have no solid grounds for applying it to the death of Christ, or for measuring the extent of his atonement by the intensity of his sufferings. The number of the saved, and the degrees of the sufferings of Christ, are the only things connected with the atonement that we can suppose to be capable of being greater or less, more or fewer. And these, we have seen, are not indispensably necessary either to the reality or the sufficiency of the atonement. We cannot suppose that the atonement would have been less real and extensive had the articles of the crown of thorns and the scourges been left out of the list of his suffer-

ings, nor that the atonement would have been more extensive and efficacious had his body while hanging in agony been pierced with a thousand spears. The sufficiency and the extensive aspect of the atonement would be the same even if not one soul were saved, and the greatness of his merit is no more to be measured by the number of the saved, than the demerit of Adam's sin is by the number of mankind.

All the elements essential to an atonement are utterly incapable of increase or diminution. Let us think: Could the Son of God have had more or less dignity of person than he actually had? Could he have been more or less nearly related to the offender, that is, more or less incarnate, than he really was? Could his moral worth and active obedience to the law have been more or less perfect than it was? Could the voluntariness of his substitution have been increased or diminished? Could his mediation have been instituted with more or less authority and approbation than it was? These elements are, even in thought, incapable of being more or less. They are infinite, unlimited, unmeasurable. They are immutable, and are as unaffected by the number of the objects which they benefit, as the light of the sun is by the multitude of objects which it unfolds.

Not only all the elements, but all the *effects* of the atonement, with the mere exception of the number of the saved, are likewise incapable of variableness, increase, or diminution. Let us think again; could the divine perfections have been more or less vindicated and glorified than they were? Could the evil of sin have been more or less powerfully demonstrated than it was? Could God's determination to defend his law have been more or less proved than it was? That is, would a less atonement have done these things sufficiently: or would a greater atonement have done them efficiently? I trow not.

The honors conferred on the person of the Redeemer are among the effects of the atonement. These also, with the exception of the number of the saved, are in-

capable of being more or less than they are. The Son of God could not have been more or less suitable and able to be an advocate and a judge than he is. To say, the greater the number there will be in heaven, the more honor there would be to the Savior, is true; but it is true only by giving another meaning to the word *honor*. The honor of the Savior is the same and unalterable, but this sentiment only means that, in the supposed case, there would be a greater *ascription* of honor to him, but it forgets that it is an honor already due, and already rising from his atonement, even if such a number were not there to ascribe it. Daily accessions to the church and to heaven do not *give* honor to the atonement, they only *own* and ascribe to it the dignity and the work which they have already found in it.

The gradations of gracious reward and heavenly glory among the saints made perfect are never traced to the capableness of the atonement being more or less; but to the personal exercise of moral agency in faithful services for God. It is "he that soweth sparingly that shall reap also sparingly, and it is he which soweth bountifully that shall reap also bountifully." Such considerations persuade me that the atonement would not have been greater or less had the agonies of Christ been more or less; and, therefore, that the sufficiency and extent of the atonement do not at all depend upon the degree or intensity of his sufferings.

This view of the atonement does not destroy the propriety and necessity of the sufferings of Christ. It might be asked, if the value and the sufficiency of the atonement arise from the dignity, worth, and voluntariness of the person of Christ, and not from the degrees of his sufferings, then, what was the necessity of his sufferings to such a degree as he *did* suffer, and where is the propriety of the scriptures so constantly referring us to his cross and sufferings?

It should be remembered that the atonement is not a measure of law, but of prerogative and grace. Had the atonement been a measure of law, it would have been

under the direction of pure equity; but as it is a measure of grace, it is, like all such measures, under the direction of infinite wisdom. This infinite wisdom arranged the *time* and *period* in which the atonement was to be effected; and, no doubt, the same wisdom ordered and regulated the *degree* of sufferings and humiliation which were to be endured in its execution. There is no incongruity in supposing, that had infinite wisdom seen fit, the *time* of atonement might have been otherwise; nor is there any absurdity or impiety in supposing also, that the *degree* of humiliation and suffering might have been otherwise.

We cannot tell all the reasons of the divine government for annexing such a penalty to the law, or for executing such a punishment on offenders. But we are not afraid to assert, that the humiliation of the Son of God to assume, on account of sin, the nature of man and the form of a servant, was, even without personal sufferings, an event of such unfathomable degradation, as to appear more calculated to secure those ends of government, than the degradation of the whole human race under the penalty to all eternity. Therefore, when we stand on the shore of the great atonement, and pose ourselves with questions, and weary ourselves with guesses, as to why he was *wounded* for our transgressions, and why he was *bruised* for our iniquities, infinite wisdom only says, "IT BECAME HIM for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

The perfection of infinite wisdom demands our implicit confidence, and gives us an assurance that if the sufferings of the blessed Mediator might, for all the ends of atonement, have been of less intensity, they would have been so arranged. We think, however, that right reason and analogy point out to us a propriety and a congruity in an atonement being as much like the threatened punishment as might be consistent with the

nature of a satisfaction. To answer the same ends as a penalty, the atonement must be somewhat like it.

All rational intelligences are capable of hope and fear, of praise and blame, and consequently, of pleasure and pain. An aversion to blame and pain is inherent in every moral agent; and so is the desire of praise and pleasure. It is to these affections that the whole administration of moral government addresses itself. Without them moral government cannot exist; as its promises and threatenings would be mere nullities. The threatenings of the law cannot be safely suspended by any expedient or atonement, unless the atonement be calculated to impress our hopes and fears as powerfully as the original penalty itself. This, according to our habits of conception, is most effectually done by the exhibition of sufferings; as by addressing itself forcibly to our aversion from pain, it is adapted to deter us from offending. As offenders were to be delivered *from* sufferings, it was arranged by infinite wisdom, that they should be delivered through the sufferings of another, in order to impress them with a sense of the evil of their transgression, of the benevolence of the divine government, and of their obligation to the Mediator. Sufferings were, therefore, introduced into the atonement, because they supplied the greatest number of motives to deter from sin, afforded the greatest amount of reasons for returning to allegiance, gave the soundest grounds of assurance of a cordial reception and pardon, and laid the most numerous and pressing bonds of obligations on the offenders.

One of the ends of the divine government in annexing a penal sanction to the law, was to deter us from sin, by addressing our hopes and fears; and, therefore, it threatened sufferings to the sinner. If the atonement that justifies the suspension of the threatening, answers this end of the government more effectually than the original penalty, then, the atonement is of a greater value to the government than the penalty itself. The history of salvation shews that the atonement *is* of greater

value than the original penalty, because it contains in its arrangement a greater number of motives to deter from sin, and to attach the subjects to the government. It is invested with this kind of value by the introduction of amazing sufferings. I say, *this kind* of value; because I do not consider this value essential to the atonement as it works *upwards* towards the divine perfections, but I consider it as *auxiliary* to the atonement, as it works *downwards*, towards the feelings of the sinner.

The great sufferings of the Son of God were not intended, nor were they calculated to affect the *character* of a single attribute in God; but they are intended, and eminently adapted to affect the disposition and the character of the sinner. Hence arose the necessity and suitableness of perfecting the atonement by sufferings. The sufferings of one so illustrious in rank and worth, of one so full of love to the offender, of one so much abhorring sin, of one so much honoring the law—and *such* sufferings—are more adapted to deter men from sin, than the tidings, or even the sight of the sufferings and torments of all the fallen beings of the universe.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE PERFECTIONS OF GOD.

SECTION 1.

The whole character of God concerned in the Atonement.

The divine perfections are those properties, attributes, and dispositions of the divine nature which form the character of God, and are made manifest in his works, and in his conduct towards the universe. We ascertain the properties and qualities of a king's mind by the institutions and laws established and promulgated in his government. Should any event transpire in the kingdom which might appear incompatible with this declared and well known character, every subject would be concerned to know, how far the king himself was concerned in that event, and by what measures he could vindicate and maintain his character notwithstanding such an event.

Let us suppose a case. In the history of the empire it is recorded that vast many of the inhabitants of one of the provinces revolted, and that the king immediately condemned them to perpetual bonds and punishment. Sometime afterwards, the inhabitants of another province renounced their allegiance to his throne; but, instead of being like the others summarily punished, a flag of truce is sent to their province, and a message of reconcilia-

tion addressed to the rebellious offenders. When such a measure would become known, it would involve the character of the king in great mystery, if not in contradiction. The revolters who had been summarily punished would say, "The king has changed his mind. There is no such wrong, after all, in the revolt; the king has thought better of it, and we have been harshly and cruelly treated." The subjects that continued in their loyalty would say, "This is mysterious. Here is the same law broken as in the former revolt in the other province, yet the same punishment does not follow. Perhaps the king sees now that such a law required too much, and that the infliction of its penalty is too severe. Peradventure, *probably*, the penalty shall never again be executed in any case. The indulged offenders would say, "This very message *implies* that the king himself sees that we had some grounds for our rebellion, that it was unwise to make such a strict law for us, and that the punishment is greater than our insurrection deserves. And as this message comes altogether unsought, we may now be sure, that the king has determined never to inflict such a severe and disproportionate punishment again."

In such circumstances the character of the king would appear, even to some of his friends, as clouded, if not eclipsed. It is true, it would become the subjects to consider that they might not know all the state of the case, that they do not know all the *arcana imperii* of the administration. And their confidence in the king should not be weakened when they hear that he has appointed a day when he will fully and amply vindicate his character and government. More especially would we expect their confidence in the king to be strengthened when it was proclaimed to them from the throne, that he was about to introduce speedily into his administration a measure that would effectually maintain, vindicate, and explain, his whole character as connected with the events that had puzzled them. Such a measure would shew that the king was concerned for his

character among his subjects, and that he wished the validity of such a measure to be tried, more by its bearings on the royal character, than by its influence on the respited offenders.

Such an expedient, we have seen, was introduced by Zaleucus into the government of the Locrians. And such a measure has, we think, been introduced by God into the administration of his moral government; and this measure is the atonement of his own Son.

The intrusion of sin into the universe, and the discrepancy in the divine administration towards fallen angels and fallen men, were calculated to obscure the character of God. His justice appeared fickle and capricious; his forbearance and clemency seemed unaccountable and unreasonable. Therefore the atonement was introduced, "to declare his RIGHTEOUSNESS for the remission of sins that are past, through the FORBEARANCE of God—that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

Hence the atonement is a measure inseparably connected with the whole of the divine character, and involves the honor of every attribute in God. It is a safe ground for the public exercise or display of every divine perfection, and it is an honorable medium for expressing the glory of every attribute. As the relation of the atonement to the divine perfections has been, we think, much misunderstood and misrepresented, our examination of such an aspect of it should be careful, serious, candid, and scriptural.

SECTION II.

Wrong views of the relation between the Atonement and the Divine Perfections.

In the holy scriptures the atonement is never represented as calling into exercise any divine perfection which it does not suppose to be in exercise before.

By exercise I do not mean *expression*. Probably

grace to the unworthy, and *mercy* to the miserable, would never have been *expressed* but for the atonement. Nevertheless, that atonement supposes that grace and mercy were previously in exercise, suggesting and providing such a measure for the honorable deliverance of the unworthy and the miserable. In the case of Daniel, the mercy of Darius was in exercise, though it was not expressed. The satisfaction which Zaleucus provided in the case of his offending son, was not the means of calling his mercy into exercise, but the medium of publicly expressing it.

The moral governor of the universe was as much *disposed* and inclined to grace and mercy without an atonement as with it, provided they could be expressed with honor to the government, and with safety to the public good. Grace and mercy are, as well as justice and truth, attributes essential to the nature and character of God. Hence the scriptures represent the atonement as the means of expressing, not the cause of exciting, the exercise of any divine perfection. When the atonement is represented by men as *exciting* in God an inclination to be merciful, and as *producing* a disposition to save, it is, in other words, adding a new perfection to God, of which the absurdity and the blasphemy are equal. God gave his Son to be an atonement, *because* he had loved the world: and redemption is through the blood of his Son, *according* to the riches of his grace.

The atonement is never represented in the scriptures as changing or modifying the nature of any divine attribute.

In the theology of popular declamation, and in some of our hymns and spiritual songs, God is often exhibited as maintaining inexorably every jot of the utmost claims of strict justice, as unflinching in his anger and severity, as high-toned and unbending in his wrath and fury against the sinner, and then, by mercy's exhibition of the atonement, he is calmed, assuaged, pacified, and ready to forgive. This is the kind of theology that is

always embodied in the dialogues or colloquies which writers frequently introduce between justice, mercy, etc. etc., about the salvation of man.

It is true that the inspired writers often speak of the indignation, the wrath, the anger, and the fury of Jehovah against his foes; and of his being reconciled towards an offender, and of his being propitiated through the atonement. Such a figurative, and metaphorical language as employed by these holy men of God when speaking of him is bold, elegant, and suitable. But a literal construction of them would not only offend against every good canon of Biblical interpretation, but would lead to every species of absurdity. These anthropopatheia of the scriptures, these figurative expressions concerning wrath, indignation, reconciliation, etc., refer to the *aspect* of the divine dispensations, and to their *effects* upon the offender, and never to the properties, affections, and dispositions of the divine nature. When the aspect and effects of the divine dispensations alter, the change is not in the infinite and eternal mind, but in the state and relations of the offenders towards the divine government. The cloudy pillar had an aspect towards the Egyptians very different from that which it had towards the Israelites. A change in the aspect of it would have been produced, not by a change in the pillar, but by a change in the relations of the two different nations.

When a change is produced in the *aspect* of the divine administrations; that is, when God is said to be propitiated or reconciled through the atonement; it is not meant that the atonement *made* him propitious, or rendered him favorable and kind: but it is meant that the atonement was the ground on which he declared himself propitious, and the medium through which he expressed himself gracious. The actual change is in the state of the sinner. The atonement places the sinner on a ground where the divine administrations may have a favorable aspect on him. It should, however, be never forgotten that until the sinner himself person-

ally avail himself of the atonement, and plead it in his own behalf; that until his moral relations be changed, God will not express himself propitiated towards him. God was, indeed, reconcilable and propitious to the three friends of Job, yet he would not express himself propitious, and declare himself reconciled, until the three friends had offered their sacrifices. Then, after a change in them, there was a change in the aspect of the divine dispensations towards them. God was still unchanged, and therefore they were not consumed. Their sacrifices produced no change in him, but they were expressive of a change in their moral relations towards him. Just so is the act of a sinner pleading the atonement of Christ in his personal behalf expressive of a change in his state and moral relations towards God.

The word of God never represents the atonement as restraining or preventing the free exercise and expressions of any divine perfection.

It cannot be concealed that some human systems of theology represent the atonement as an effectual barrier raised against the operations of infinite justice. Our books and our discourses abound with such statements as the following:—that the Lord Jesus Christ endured or paid to infinite justice the utmost farthing of its demands against a certain number of offenders;—that he endured the identical amount of the punishment due for their sins;—that it is a grievous wrong to exact the same punishment once of the surety, and again of the offenders: and that, consequently, justice can now lay nothing to their charge, can never proceed against them in judgment, and that they are within the enclosures of the atonement, where justice cannot reach them. Thus, the atonement is frequently represented as the city of refuge, and infinite justice as the avenger of blood, thirsting for the death of the sinner.

It is not a likely way to promote reverential piety, to represent infinite justice as an infinitely dreadful and unlovely attribute; nor can it promote practical holiness

to represent our salvation as secured, not only in direct opposition to divine justice, but, also in manifest superiority and triumph over it. This species of atonement would entirely subvert all moral government. The language of the scriptural atonement is, that the blood of Christ redeemed us *to* God, not *from* God.

The claims of infinite justice are as honorable as unabated, and as unimpaired *with* an atonement, as *without* it. Eternal righteousness has not resigned a single demand, nor relaxed a single bond, nor withdrawn a single threatening. Every iota and tittle of the law is as much in force and honor *after* the atonement as *before* it; *with* it, as *without* it. Atonement has no ground enclosed out of the domains of justice.

No sinner pleading the atonement before the throne of God shall be accepted, unless he also distinctly acknowledge and own that the claims of justice on him are right and true. Under this practical acknowledgment every good man is to live as one that must give an account to infinite righteousness. And eventually all the despisers of salvation will feel that the operations of justice towards them are free and unshackled, notwithstanding the splendid atonement once offered for them.

We have now brought under notice three representations of the atonement in connection with the divine attributes, which we deem incorrect and unscriptural. The atonement that is exhibited as exciting, changing, or restraining the exercise of any perfection in God, is not the atonement of the scriptures.

It ought to be remarked that these three representations of atonement originate in the conception that the atonement is of the nature of a commercial transaction, the payment of a debt, or the literal endurance of a threatened punishment. A commercial atonement is the πρωτον ψευδος of every error connected with unscriptural views of redemption. This is the only principle that can maintain that God is, by the atonement, induced to be merciful, just as a creditor is induced to release his

debtor upon the full payment of his debts. This is the only principle that can aver that the atonement effects a modification or change in the divine feelings or dispositions towards the sinner, just as a judge would be disposed to remit a criminal's punishment, after his severity had spent itself in the unmitigated lashes inflicted on the criminal's friend. This is the only principle that can assert that the atonement restrains and checks the operations of infinite justice, just as a creditor cannot again imprison a debtor for a debt once discharged—or as a tyrant cannot claim a captive for whom he has received a ransom price. And I must add, this is the principle, that unnerves our ministerial addresses, that jaundices our view of Christian doctrines, that drives its thousands to apostasy, and lulls its millions into a false and fatal security.

Since the atonement does not produce the effects and modifications above mentioned, it may be asked, what is the relation which the atonement sustains towards the divine perfections? The reply is, that the atonement does not affect or modify the character of any of the perfections of God; but it is a medium capable of giving a full expression to them all. It is a public expression, display, and vindication of all the divine attributes.

SECTION III.

The Divine Perfections honored by the Atonement.

In the evangelical history of the sufferings of the Son of God, we often meet with the remark, that in them or by them "God glorified his name." The name of God is the entire character of *all* his perfections. It is the purpose of this section to shew how this has been fully honored in the atonement.

In the first place,—The atonement shews that no divine perfection was implicated in the intrusion of sin into the universe.

The revolters against the divine government are loath to ascribe their disaffection entirely to themselves; and many have roundly asserted that the origin of evil is in God himself. Reflections have been cast upon infinite wisdom for contriving a moral system capable of evil, upon infinite power for permitting the entrance of sin, upon infinite rectitude for suffering the continuance of sin, and upon infinite benevolence for preserving a system in which evil is so prevalent. But the atonement shews that God was in no wise accessory to the intrusion of sin, neither by secret decree, by arbitrary withdrawment of influences, nor by any deficiency in government.

The atonement demonstrates that God has done every thing to oppose sin which could be done in a moral government. The language of God in the atonement is, "What could I have done more unto my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" By the publication of the moral law, by the sanction of rewards and punishments, by the execution of judgments, by solemn oracles through prophets, and by sacrificial institutions, God has borne a constant and unvarying testimony against sin. The whole of this testimony is most amply corroborated by the atonement; for it magnifies the law, enforces the legal sanctions, justifies all judicial inflictions, confirms divine revelations, and verifies all sacrificial types and shadows.

The atonement itself is the greatest and the clearest proof of God's abhorrence of sin, and of his determination to oppose and to punish it. In the atonement God has "condemned sin;" and by condemning sin he has vindicated every attribute from the suspicion of being implicated in it. God could never have been accessory to an evil which he has been at such cost and expense to oppose and remove.

It vindicates infinite wisdom by shewing that it introduced into the system nothing calculated to produce evil, but every thing to prevent it. It vindicates infinite power by shewing that omnipotence never was, and never could be made, the *rule* or the measure of the

divine conduct in a moral government. It vindicates infinite rectitude by shewing that it had provided abundant means and inducements to prevent sin, that it sincerely prohibited every sin, that it is determined to punish every sin, and that it has expressed its detestation and condemnation of it in the highest Personage in the universe. It vindicates infinite benevolence by shewing that sin is the exception, and not the rule in the universe; that a compensative measure had been introduced into the divine government which would bring an accession of good to the universe, and that all the divine perfections are more fully and more gloriously developed in the appointed remedy, than they would have been in the prevention of the moral disorder.

In the second place,—The atonement shows that no divine perfection was unconcerned about the honors of moral government.

The instantaneous punishment of fallen angels had given a demonstration that the honors of moral government stood high in the divine estimation; but the forbearance towards man was calculated to excite a suspicion whether they were so now, or not.

A suspension of the penalty or punishment due to sinful man was calculated to awaken in holy angels, and in wicked spirits, a thought that probably, even JUSTICE itself, which had been erst so prompt and vigorous in punishment, had now become somewhat lax, hesitating, and indifferent, towards the interests of moral government. There is also, I think, a general impression on the minds of unrenewed men, that LOVE, GRACE, and MERCY, are some perfections in God that always are kindly disposed towards an unfortunate criminal, always side with him, always plead for him, are always concerned for his liberation and safety, *honorably*, indeed, if means can be found to make it so, but honorably or not, these perfections always feel very tenderly towards the criminal. Now, it is evident, that if moral government is to be carried on, both these impressions must be removed. These impressions would not be removed by the actual liberation of fallen angels, nor by the

eventual punishment of all the human race. Hence, then, arises the necessity of some wise expedient, and the expedient is the atonement of the Son of God. And the atonement removes these impressions.

The atonement defends MERCY from the charge of indifference to moral government, by shewing that mercy would not express itself, nor deal out a favor, nor deign a smile to the offender, until it had given a public expression of its abhorrence of his sin, and had seen every claim of the government honored. It defends JUSTICE from the charge of indifference to the government, by shewing that the ends of justice are as effectually answered by the atonement, as by the literal infliction of the threatened penalty, and that it has not abated one claim upon the sinner. The atonement is introduced and shewn forth for the very intent and purpose of *declaring* infinite justice, that God might be JUST, and the justifier of him that believeth. God was just without an atonement, and would have been gloriously just in the punishment of our entire race; but then, he would not have been a JUSTIFIER of believers. The atonement is shewn forth that he might be a JUSTIFIER and the JUST, that he might be just in justifying. In the atonement mercy and justice unite to magnify the law, and to make divine moral government honorable.

In the third place,—The atonement shews that no divine perfection has been injured or wronged by the substitution of a Mediator between the government and the offenders.

The attributes which are supposed to have been apparently slurred by the introduction of a compensative scheme into the divine administration, are *truth*, *justice*, and *grace*.

We have stated that the sufferings of Christ made an atonement, not by being a literal infliction of the identical penalty threatened, but by being substituted and accepted in the room of the penalty due to the offender. These pages assert that Jesus Christ in his death did not suffer the identical punishment which the law had threatened against the sinner.

This statement is met by an argument employed in behalf of the honor of eternal TRUTH. It is said, "Death was threatened in the penalty, and eternal and immutable veracity requires that the substitute should suffer the identical death threatened to the transgressor, just as Pythias would have suffered for Damon."

This is the strongest argument in favor of the position that Christ suffered the literal penalty of the law. In this argument it is overlooked or forgotten, that eternal and immutable veracity requires that the sinner ONLY should die, and not a substitute. The threatening is, "the soul that *sinneth*, IT shall die." Therefore, should a substitute even suffer the identical death, truth is still very far from being literally fulfilled. If eternal veracity can dispense with the identical *sufferer*, may it not also, under the direction of perfect wisdom, dispense with the identical *sufferings*? I think it may; and that it has done so: and in vindication of the honor of divine verity, I submit the following considerations:—

The truth of any proposition or declaration consists more in the *spirit* than in the *letter* of it. Truth in a *promise* and truth in a *threatening* are different, especially in measures of government. Truth in a promise obliges the promiser to perform his word, or else to be regarded as unfaithful and false But truth in a threatening does not, in the administration of discipline or government, actually oblige to literal execution: it only makes the punishment to be due and admissible. A threatened penalty does not deprive the lawgiver of his sovereign and supra-legal power to dispense with it, if he can secure the ends of it by any other measure And if the *spirit* of the threatening be preserved, the truth of it is not violated by its not being executed to the *letter*. If a criminal be sentenced to lose his life, the spirit of the sentence is, that his life shall be no longer continued among good subjects, to wrong and injure them. Should this sentence be commuted to transportation for life, the letter of the sentence is not fulfilled, but every one will see that the spirit is preserved.

This supra-legal prerogative of suspending punishment God has exercised in many instances, as in the sparing of Nineveh, and, I believe, in the sparing of our first parents. The identical penalty of the Eden constitution was not literally executed, either on man or on Christ. It was not executed on *man*, for then there would have been *no* human race. The first pair would have been destroyed, and mankind would never have come into being. It was not executed on *Christ*. He did no sin; he violated no constitution, and yet he *died*. Surely no law or constitution under which he was, could legally visit him with a penalty. If it be said that he suffered it for others, let it be remembered that immutable verity as much requires that the penalty should be inflicted on the *literal* sinner *only*, as that it should be inflicted at all.

Nevertheless eternal and immutable truth gathers its fairest and fullest honors from the atonement of Christ. The atonement answers all the ends of government as effectually as they would have been answered by the punishment of the offenders. Though the *letter* of the penalty be not executed, yet "the spirit and the truth" of it are preserved; and not only preserved, but are more transcendantly demonstrated and honored by the atonement than by literal inflictions upon all the millions of the human race.

INFINITE JUSTICE has also been deemed dishonored in the substitution of a Mediator by the supposition that it punished the innocent instead of the guilty.

It seems to me that it is thoughtless and wrong to say that God has in any-wise *punished* the substitute. It were better to say that God allowed sufferings to be inflicted on him. Indeed I deem it incorrect to say that justice has *punished* an innocent being at any time, though thousands of innocent persons have been involved in the punishment of the wicked. The character of justice is as much obscured by the sufferings of the innocent *with* the wicked, as by the sufferings of the innocent *for* the wicked. The history of the divine

government presents an immovable array of facts, mustered from the general deluge, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, earthquakes, war, famine and pestilence, in which the innocent have suffered with the guilty. Yet in every case we cannot gainsay that "the judge of the whole earth has done right." Before any persons renounce the doctrine of the atonement, or that Christ died *for* transgressors, let them account for his suffering *with* transgressors. Or, indeed, let them find a reason for his suffering at all.

Without entangling the death of Christ with the difficulties of having been *with* sinners or *for* sinners, let any one single out his death as a simple fact in the divine administration, and account for it on the principles of justice. He was innocent, harmless, undefiled, did no sin, and kept the law in all points; and yet he suffered pain, reproach and death. Where is the justice of this? —Will it be said that he died to prove the truth of his doctrine? Then we would ask, Does the *justice* of God deprive a holy and innocent being of life to prove and confirm the *veracity* of God? Such awful sufferings are rather calculated to *disprove* the truth of his doctrine by exhibiting him as a disowned impostor, "smitten of God and inflicted." If infinite justice can admit of the death of an innocent being to prove the veracity of God in any doctrine, there is nothing to prevent it from admitting the same measure to express his hatred of sin, and his willingness to save. It is sometimes said that Christ died for an example to men. This does not vindicate or explain the *justice* of his death. Christ did not justly deserve to be made such an example of; to see the innocent suffer like the most flagitious sinner, gives no encouragement to one to be innocent; and the death of an innocent person can never teach the guilty not to fear the evil of death. The difficulties about the justice of the death of Christ are not removed by saying that he died for our benefit and advantage. Is this a proceeding of justice towards Christ? Does justice by such a measure treat Christ, an innocent person, according to

his due? Does not this inclose the whole doctrine of imputed worth and righteousness, as some are benefited for the sake of another. Examine the death of Christ as you will; try it by any test; it is utterly inexplicable except on the principle of its being a substituted expedient in moral government.

Let it be considered that the Lord Jesus Christ is always in the scriptures signally marked out for sufferings. All the prophecies of the Jewish church pointed to these sufferings, all the doctrines and administrations of the gospel refer to them; and, I might say, all the counsels of eternity looked forward to them, and all the everlasting songs of the redeemed will look backward to them. What, then, can be the meaning of sufferings that centre in themselves all interests from everlasting to everlasting? What principle can explain them? The divine oracles, simple and dignified, respond, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness in the forgiveness of sin."

So say the oracles that speak from heaven, but not so say some men professing themselves wise These men charge these very propitiatory sufferings with *injustice* and *wrong*. Strange! that God should ever think of *declaring* his righteousness, by a measure that was in itself unrighteous and wrong. Surely the judgment of men, in this case, is not according to truth. The scriptures explicitly assert, that the atonement was a medium for God to *declare* his righteousness. But for God, by an unjust expedient, to declare his righteousness with a slur upon it, would be to expose it to contempt and desecration.

The supposition that justice is obscured by the atonement, proceeds from misapprehensions of the nature of the atonement, and from wrong conceptions of the nature of divine justice. It is rarely considered and defined what is the JUSTICE to which the atonement relates. By divine justice is generally meant that perfection in God which gives to every being his due, and deals with

every being according to his character. This is called distributive justice. Now upon the shewing of either the friends or the foes of atonement, I ask was *this* justice at all *declared* in the sufferings of Christ? Our opponents themselves being judges, Were the sufferings of Christ *due* to him? Did the justice of God treat Christ according to the deservings of his character?

Take it for granted that the sufferings of Christ were only a testimony to the truth of his doctrine, or an example of obedience to the divine will, and that thus, his sufferings were for the benefit of sinners: and then try to answer these questions. Were such an example and testimony, in justice, *due* to sinners? Did sinful men, in justice, *deserve* such benefits? Did infinite justice, in conferring such favors on them, treat them according to *their character*?

It is impossible to explain either the nature or the consequences of the death of Christ on the principles of distributive justice, as in it, neither Christ nor the sinner is treated according to what is due to his respective character. The justice that was declared and honored in the atonement, is PUBLIC JUSTICE. As public justice is rather a principle in the administration of a government, than an attribute of the divine essence, I shall reserve the full consideration of it to the chapter on the atonement in its relation to moral government. I will just observe, that when we say that Christ has satisfied justice, or that justice was satisfied in the atonement, our meaning is, that the wise and just ends of government were completely secured by the atonement, that through it the lawgiver's prerogative to pardon was exercised with safety to the public good, and that "grace reigned *through* righteousness."

SOVEREIGN GRACE is another perfection which is supposed to be obscured and clouded by the atonement. It is said, if the good that comes to the sinner, comes through an atonement, then it is not free and gratuitous.

This argument has been fairly met and answered a thousand times, yet, quick or dead, it is constantly used, as if its friends thought that a bad argument was as indestructible and immortal as a good one. It ought to be enough to remark now, that this argument is in direct opposition to the express declaration of scripture.

The writers of the New Testament uniformly and explicitly represent the mediatorial undertaking of Jesus Christ as the highest proof, and the most powerful expression of sovereign grace and infinite love. Their language is;— 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. "God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

Is it not strange that God should shew forth to public admiration, and "commend" in the atonement a perfection which men declare to be utterly destroyed by it? It is impossible for us to avoid the conclusion that the abettors of this argument, and the writers of the New Testament, differ "wide as the poles," in their views of the grace of God, and of the sufferings of Christ. The apostles represent the atonement or propitiation as "commending" the grace of God, and as "declaring" the righteousness of God. The abettors of this argument "declare" the atonement to be utterly subversive of all grace and righteousness. The question which of the parties is right, must be settled by the evidences of the inspiration of the New Testament. Our opponents will allow us to recommend them to consider whether their views are likely to be accurate and sound, when they see in the atonement tendencies the very reverse of what Christ and his apostles saw.

The argument which we have been combatting is not at all available, except on the principle of the atonement being a commercial transaction, a *quid pro quo*.

If sin be represented as properly and literally a debt, and not a moral offence; and if the atonement be set forth as a literal payment of that debt, and not a moral transaction supplying to the government honorable grounds for pardoning a criminal; then, I think that grace does *not* appear in the discharge of the debtor. The creditor received what was *due* to him, and release is now justly *due* to the debtor. The release of such a debtor is no favor.

Sin is called a debt only in figurative language. No one will say that our sins are *owing* to God. The real nature of sin is an abstraction or withdrawment of what is *due*, a transgression of the law, a moral and a public offence against God as the Governor of the universe. The atonement is represented in the scriptures, not as a bribe for exciting divine love, but as a medium for exercising it; not as a motive to induce God to be gracious, but as the means for expressing himself gracious; not as a commercial payment making release due, but as an honorable ground for making pardon admissible and safe.

Take the following illustrations of the possibility of favors being perfectly gratuitous and free, though conferred on valuable considerations and honorable grounds. When the Athenian senate granted pardon to Æschylus for the sake of his brother Amyntas, the pardon was unbribed, and entirely of favor and grace. When Philemon received Onesimus for the sake of Paul, his reception back to favor was all of grace. When David shewed favor to Mephibosheth for the sake of Jonathan, the favor was entirely of grace. And when God forgives sinners "for Christ's sake," it is to the praise of the glory of his grace. The loss of Amyntas's arm at Salamis, the labors of Paul, and the kindness of Jonathan, were not causes to produce benevolence, but grounds for the safe and honorable expression of it. David wanted nothing as a motive to induce him to spare Absalom, but he did want something as an expedient through which he could spare him with honor to his throne and

government. If a medium *had* been found, as in the instances of Æschylus, Onesimus, and Mephibosheth, the expression of David's love would not have been due to Absalom; for the medium of expressing it would not at all destroy the grace and freeness of it.

This argument from the freeness of divine grace is never used by its friends, except to oppose the atonement. It is not that they care for the honors of free and sovereign grace. They do not consider, that their use of the argument is as much opposed to the doctrine of repentance, as it is to the hypothesis of a commercial atonement. None of them preach pardon without repentance; and even those of them who preach universal restoration make it honorable only after an intervening punishment. If divine grace, to be free and unconditional, must be supposed to act without safe grounds, without a just reason, without an honorable medium, then, why not do away with punishment altogether? Why not renounce the doctrine of repentance, as well as that of the atonement? The hardened sinner no more approves of free pardon through repentance, than the self-righteous relishes a free pardon through an atonement. The apostles preached the atonement, and repentance, as if never suspecting that they infringed on the honors of sovereign grace. I apprehend, then, that what I have here dignified with the name of an "argument" of our opponents, deserves no better name than that of a sophism.

To plead that a boon cannot be free and gratuitous if granted upon honorable grounds only, goes to destroy and subvert moral government entirely. For a governor to treat the injured and the injurious subject alike is to destroy the difference between right and wrong, virtue and vice. Rectoral love is as much exercised and honored in punishing the injurious, as in protecting the injured. In God the attribute of love does not consist in private love towards man, but in good-will towards the universe. It is as much concerned for the public good as for individual happiness. In the

atonement God appears LOVE, love to sinners, and love to law and justice.

The love of God is not love expressed by a weak and an unreasonable fondness, nor love exercised by arbitrary power; it is rectoral love, expressed, indeed, freely and gratuitously, but expressed honorably and safely. Even in the days of Job it was clearly understood, that an atonement did not destroy the freeness of divine love, or the sovereignty of divine grace. God was freely disposed to pardon Job's friends before they offered their sacrifice, and their pardon was freely granted and conveyed through their sacrifice. The deliverance of a sick man from the borders of the grave is ascribed to free grace expressed on honorable grounds. "He will be *gracious* unto him, and will say, Deliver him from going down to the pit, *for* I have found a ransom." Hence then our conclusion is warrantable, that in the atonement infinite love is freely exercised and transcendantly honored.

In the fourth place,—The atonement shews that there is no perfection in God opposed to the well-being of the sinner.

This well-being is not *due* to the sinner; and of himself, he will never reclaim it, for every sin is moral suicide. But neither the loss, nor the irretrievableness if it, is to be ascribed to God.

The scripture sometimes describe God as angry daily with the wicked, and as whetting his sword against him. This figurative mode of expression is used to teach us the certainty, that to retrieve our well-being in sin is as hopeless, *as if* all that is in God's nature were opposed to us. Taking their position on such inspired testimony, some theological writers have proceeded so incautiously, as to give an idea of a kind of *clashing* among the perfections of God, with regard to the well-being of a sinner. They speak of love, and grace, and mercy, as if favorable to the sinner; but holiness, justice, and truth, as sternly opposed to him.

The provision of atonement as an honorable medium of salvation to the chief of sinners, is a demonstration that God was on the side of "good," that his thoughts were thoughts of peace, and not of evil; and that in these thoughts there was no clashing of perfections, no jarring of inclinations and dispositions. Mercy was never opposed to the exercise of justice and truth. Justice and truth have never opposed the exercise of mercy. Whatever divine perfections can be exercised in a moral government, only find a suitable and honorable medium, and they can all be exercised freely and gloriously.

The design of the atonement is to bring sinners to love and esteem every thing that is in God, and to honor every divine attribute, that he may honor justice, even as he honors mercy. The theology that represents mercy as the *darling* attribute of God, and his justice as the sinner's foe, cannot be conducive to the formation of a full-orbed piety. Infinite holiness is opposed to man's sin, without being opposed to his well-being; and infinite justice treats him as a criminal, not to hinder his individual happiness so much, as to protect the well-being of the universe.

God in the atonement shews that every perfection is *darling* to him. He has devised a way to exercise them all in the name and for the sake of the *dearest* object to him in the universe, his only begotten Son. The sinner who looks to the atonement, sees and feels that there is no perfection in God opposed to his welfare. The author of sin is alone the author of misery. Even in hell, no sinner will ever feel that his misery is owing to some divine attribute having been opposed to his happiness. He will never condemn God, though he may wickedly blaspheme him. He will never suspect that he perished because that infinite love had not been sufficiently expensive, that infinite wisdom had not contrived a plan sufficient in extent to meet his case,—that the honors of infinite justice had not been sufficiently provided for to admit of his pardon, that infinite mercy

had not been sufficiently free, or because that the law had not been sufficiently magnified. No; He will feel that he is his own destroyer, that every attribute in God had provided for his welfare, that not a single perfection had given one smile of encouragement to his sin and rebellion, and that no divine attribute had thrown or left in the way any obstacle to his reconciliation. "This is the condemnation,"—not an angry attribute or a frowning perfection, but "that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light." The whole gospel of God says, "Fury is not in me." It is not a few attributes, but the whole Godhead, it is God "all in all," that is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, without imputing to them their transgressions.

In the fifth place,—The atonement provides that in the final results of its operations, in moral government, all the divine perfections will be honored and glorified.

The atonement does not *secure* that *all* its designs shall be infallibly accomplished. Such an arrangement would have been inconsistent with the nature of moral government, which is a government of *free* agents, and exercised not by force, but by the exhibition of inducements.

The measure of atonement, like every other measure in a moral administration, designed and adapted for the use of free agents in a state of probation, must be supposed to be susceptible of failure. The measure in Eden failed to keep our first parents in innocency. The measure on Sinai failed to preserve the Israelites from idolatry. And the atonement may fail to prevent some from neglecting so great a salvation, and from denying that Lord that bought them.

Nevertheless, the issue, the upshot of the whole will exhibit every divine perfection in untarnished lustre and glory. The atonement is, like its own ministry, "unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved and in them that perish." In the perdition of the wicked, eternal *veracity* will be glorified by the literal infliction of the threatened penalty upon the offenders themselves,

who had despised and refused the benefits of the substituted atonement of the Son of God. Infinite *rectitude* will be glorified, as *distributive* justice, by rewarding every offender according to his character; and as *public* justice, by making their punishment a memento and example to the universe. Even goodness, grace, mercy, and love, will be honorably and gloriously vindicated in the impression produced by the atonement upon all intelligences, and principalities, and powers, in heavenly places, that such a punishment was abundantly deserved and merited; and also by the self-condemnations of the despisers themselves, as those who had voluntarily rejected the counsel of God, against themselves.

In the salvation of believers every perfection will be honored gloriously. At the close of the administration of the atonement, the Mediator will appear "to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in them that believe." He would not thus present himself publicly to the universe, he would be neither glorified nor admired in the effects of the atonement on the redeemed, if any attribute of God were tarnished or dishonored in their salvation. Infinite benevolence will be glorified in the accession of happiness to the universe; wisdom, in the success of the stupendous expedient; mercy, in the bliss and number of the saved; truth, in the fulfilment of all engagements and promises; holiness, in the triumphs over sin; justice, in the secured ends of law and government; and love, in the established harmony of all intelligences in the universe.

SECTION IV.

The extent of the Atonement illustrated by its relation to the Divine Attributes.

It has been shewn that in the atonement as a compensative measure, substituted instead of the punishment of offenders, and supplying honorable grounds for offering pardon, the honors of all the attributes are care-

fully consulted, perfectly vindicated, and gloriously displayed. On the contrary, in an atonement which is commercial in its character, and limited in its design, the divine perfections seem to clash in their interests, and to be displayed without harmony.

If the atonement be a transaction of commutative or commercial justice, that is, if the atonement consists in the substitute suffering the identical penalty due to a limited number of offenders, and in suffering it for that number only, to the exclusion of all the lost, such an atonement mars the character of every attribute in God.

A commercial and limited atonement dishonors the infinite *veracity* of God. By such an arrangement veracity appears violated, unfulfilled, and compromised. It is not honored in the execution of the threatening. It threatened only "the soul that sinneth;" and yet it was a substitute who never sinned that died; and even a literal execution upon a substitute cannot be a measure of immutable verity. Divine verity is also dishonored in the apparent, if not *manifest*, insincerity of divine invitations, and of the offers of the gospel to sinners. If the atonement was not designedly offered *for* all, its benefits cannot with sincere purpose be offered *to* all. If the gospel offers be *true*, they are true, not for ought the sinner or the preacher knows, but they are true according to the simple and real verity of the case between God and the sinner. If the general offers of the gospel be false, if they are not simple, sincere, and unsophisticated *verities*, "then is our preaching vain, and our faith is also vain," for truth is fallen in the street, its crown in the dust, and its pure robes sullied.

An atonement of a commercial and limited character exhibits infinite *mercy* as inadequate, restrained, and exclusive. It brings forward a provision that is not sufficient to meet all the exigency of the case. If Christ sustained the sufferings due to a limited number, in proportion to the aggravation of their respective guilt, then, upon what principle can the suffering of a penalty due to a part of mankind, be *sufficient* for the

whole? Sufficient for what is it? Is it sufficient to *save* them, though the punishment due to *them* was never endured by Christ? If it be not sufficient for this, the conclusion cannot be avoided, that it is sufficient for *nothing*, as far as *they* are concerned. In such an atonement the character of mercy does not appear with the bland, open, generous, free, and unbounded aspect, which it wears in the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

Infinite *justice* has its glory obscured by a commercial and limited atonement. Justice is honored by it neither in the salvation of the believer, nor in the punishment of the unbeliever. In the salvation of a sinner, neither Christ nor the sinner is treated according to what was due to personal character respectively. The perdition of the unbeliever throws a cloud around the honors of justice. Justice has provided a "sorer punishment" for the despisers of the blood of atonement, yet in real verity, on the shewing of commercial redemption, that blood was to *them* an unappropriable thing; it had not been shed in the enduring of the penalty due to *them*. Yet the despisers of the atonement are *punished* more sorely, for *not* appropriating what did not verily belong to them, and what was never intended to benefit them. Infinite justice punishes them awfully and eternally for *not* having committed a sacrilege upon the sacred and exclusive inheritance and possession of the church. How different is this calculating and mercenary hypothesis from that expedient that God shews forth to declare his righteousness, with a character unrebukable, and with an honor unsullied.

The hypothesis of a commercial and limited atonement destroys the glories of free and sovereign grace in dispensing pardon and salvation. Free grace does not appear in dispensing pardon upon this scheme. After the identical punishment due to the offenders has been endured by the substitute, the deliverance of the offenders is a matter of right, due and claimable on the

principle of distributive justice. Hence some of the advocates of such an atonement represent pardon as a boon not to be supplicated, but to be "sued out," as a claim. And hence also the language which is sometimes used, that "the believer now stands on higher grounds than God," as it would be unjust to refuse him salvation.

The honors of infinite benevolence are disparaged by this commercial redemption. Sometimes it is said, that the atonement of Christ was sufficient for all, had it pleased God to have designed and intended it for all. This is a mere evasion, and supplies neither a proof, nor a vindication of divine and infinite love. Apply this principle to any other administration of God. Suppose God to have introduced into the material universe a principle, say gravitation, of sufficient force and fitness to preserve order among all the orbs of space. Yet, in some places of his dominions stars hurled against stars, and systems rushed against systems, spreading ruin every where. If we found it difficult to reconcile this crash of worlds with infinite benevolence, would it be enough to say, "the principle of gravitation was sufficient for all worlds, had it pleased God to have designed it for them all?" Or, suppose England provided a sum, or any other consideration, sufficient to ransom all the slaves in her colonies, and yet thousands of slaves were still languishing and dying in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity, would it be a vindication of the benevolence of the government to say, "the ransom was sufficient to redeem all the slaves, had it been designed for them all?" No; designing *for a few* a ransom sufficient *for all*, would confer no honor upon benevolence.

The wisdom of God shares in all the dishonor which a commercial and limited atonement casts on the other perfections of God. If the atonement consisted in sufferings sufficient for all, but designed for a limited number, such prodigality in agonies, sufferings, and blood, reflects no credit on the wisdom that planned it.

Sometimes, the perdition of the wicked is advanced as an irrefragable evidence against the death of Christ being an atonement for all; as in the case of the lost, Christ must have died in vain. For Christ to die in vain is supposed to be a reflection on the wisdom of God. Though I think this argument is raised from inattention to the nature of all measures of moral government, yet it comes with very bad grace from the advocates of a limited atonement. If the atonement was sufficient for all, sufficient for the saved, and sufficient for the lost, what is become of the sufficiency for the latter part? Even on their own shewing, Christ has died *partly* in vain. The hypothesis supposes that out of the lavish expenditure of sufferings, and out of the infinite accumulation of merits, only a small amount is *designed* by God to be of any service to himself, or of use to any of his creatures. What become of more than was sufficient to save the elect? It is, on their own shewing, *vain*. A moral atonement that does not calculate the sufferings of Christ arithmetically, supposes that though it may *not* profit those who receive its grace in vain, yet it shall not be in vain as to the great ends of moral government; and it should be remembered, that the salvation of offenders is not the chief end of an atonement, but the glory of God's public character. The atonement does this, even if not one soul were saved. On the other hand a commercial atonement, measuring the amount of merits by the quantum of sufferings endured, or by the mass of blessings conveyed, squanders and throws away as useless, vast treasures of all-sufficient merit. It makes that part of the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, unconsecrated to any holy end, unappropriated to any good purpose.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE PURPOSES OF GOD.

A writer upon the decrees of God is generally regarded as one "who meddleth with his Maker;" and his inquiries, however cautiously conducted, are hushed with the aphorism, "secret things belong unto the Lord, things revealed belong to us and to our children for ever." The citers of this text suppose that the divine purposes and decrees are among "the secret things," and not among "the things revealed," and therefore, do not belong "to us and our children."

Is it true that the divine purposes are *not* among the "things revealed?" If they are *not*, an inquiry into them is an impertinent intrusion upon the arcana of the Godhead. But if they can be proved to be among the "things revealed," they "belong to us and to our children," as moral means.

It is indisputably "revealed" that there are such things as divine purposes and decrees. In numerous instances it has been revealed what these purposes are. Even if the purposes themselves are not in the list of moral means, the *revelation* of their existence is undoubtedly so. In the pages of scripture the announcement or revelation of these purposes is always connected with their influence on practical religion. That the practical tendency of such a developement of the divine decrees is beneficial, may be illustrated by the following case:—A general haranguing his army just before a battle, gives them a solemn assurance, that it is

decreed for them to have the victory. This announcement, so far from lulling them to indolence and inactivity, acts upon them as a moral inducement to put forth the most determined and vigorous exertion of their agency. If a coward abuse this announcement to slink from effort; if the enemy abuse it, to charge it with presumption; such an abuse would not, in real life, be regarded as a fair argument against its practical influence. The actual tendency of the announcement is to produce manly effort. This instance illustrates the holy tendency of the scriptural exhibitions of the divine decrees, as a moral inducement to persuade men to obedience, and to perseverance in grace.

SECTION I.

The Atonement the Foundation of the Divine Purposes.

The holy scriptures represent the atonement of Christ as the foundation of all the arrangements, counsels, and purposes of God. The system of the universe contemplated by the eternal mind, was a system intellectual and accountable; a system susceptible of the intrusion of sin; a system, nevertheless, not to be given up to the ravages of evil, but to be restored and repaired; and, consequently, a system to be altogether conveyed over to the hands of a Mediator, who should, by a compensative administration, establish eternal order and holiness.

The moral system of the universe could not, after the intrusion of sin, answer the end of its creation, without being restored or repaired. This *restoration*, therefore, forms one of its characteristics, and seems as essential to it, as its intellectual and accountable elements. No way of restoring or repairing it has been revealed, except that by a Mediator. As its restoration alone secures the end of its creation, and as this could only be accomplished by a Mediator, mediation is essential

to the system. The whole arrangement forms one mediatorial constitution. The system of the universe was not even contemplated irrespective of a Mediator. The principles of mediation pervade the whole of it, entering into its creation and sustenance, government and restoration, and into its eternal deliverance and glorification.

The entire arrangement of all the affairs of the universe is to be regarded as one grand mediatorial system, the ground and foundation of which is the atonement of the Son of God. By saying that mediation is essential to the system, I mean that it is on account of the atonement, as the ground of a compensative administration, that God carries on the affairs of his government. The whole of the manifold wisdom of God, exercised in the universe, is regulated entirely "according to the eternal purpose which he *purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*." Eph. iii, 9, 10, 11.

To ask what would have become of the moral universe, had no atonement been appointed, is just as rational as to ask, what would have become of the material universe, had the principle of gravitation not been appointed. All the proceedings in the moral universe take for granted a mediatorial constitution, just as those in the physicial creation suppose gravitation.

In the scriptures the Lord Jesus Christ is often represented as "The ELECT," "The CHOSEN of God," the only begotten, the FIRST-BORN of many brethren." The people of God are represented, as "*chosen* in him," and for his sake. The whole universe is described as under his sway: for he, as "the head of all principalities and powers, ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things."

It is one of the most prominent articles in the doctrines of the apostle Paul, that the atonement of Christ is the foundation of all the divine counsels, &c. that the whole system of the moral universe is one entire mediatorial constitution. "We know that [*the universe*] all things work together for good to them that love God, to them

who are the called *according to his purpose.* For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that HE might be the FIRST BORN among many brethren. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places IN Christ; *according as* he hath *chosen* US IN HIM before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him, in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children BY JESUS CHRIST to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted IN THE BELOVED. IN WHOM we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath PURPOSED in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of time, HE MIGHT GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE ALL THINGS IN CHRIST, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even IN HIM. Whom he hath set at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above ALL principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put ALL THINGS [*the universe*] under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over ALL THINGS to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that FILLETH ALL IN ALL." Rom. viii, 28, 29. Eph. i, 3—10, 20—23.

These beautiful passages exhibit the mediation of Christ as the centre of all the counsels and all the works of God—the SUN around which all the divine purposes and all the divine operations move.

The apostle John likewise represents all the divine purposes as being administered in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ. In the fifth chapter of the Apocalypse, the divine purposes and counsels concerning the universe, are considered as a book sealed with

seven seals, the contents of which were to be developed and administered by one in the midst of the throne, who was a Lamb as it had been slain. The giving of the book to the Lamb represents the committing of the whole of the divine measures and counsels to the Son of God. The Lamb who takes the book is in the *midst* of the throne, in the very source and centre of all authority and favor in the universe. In that centre of the universe he is "a Lamb as it had been slain," a Lamb of atonement, the centre of the administration of all moral measures, to which all the plans, and all the decrees, and all the works, and all the ways of God have constant reference.

SECTION II.

The Atonement an Expression of the Divine Counsels.

The atonement is, itself, one of the counsels of God, and should be considered as a specimen of all his counsels; an index to their course, and a sample of their character.

The atonement is a public expression of the benevolence of the divine decrees.

In the atonement of his Son the eternal and blessed God unbosoms his purposes, and says, "Fury is not in me;" "I know the thoughts which I have thought concerning you, thoughts of *peace* and not of *evil*." Nothing can be so revolting to humanity, and so repugnant to a heavenly mind, as an hypothesis that supposes the great God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, from eternity brooding over a scheme or counsel of *evil* against the creature.

The counsel of God, ordered in all things and sure, is a counsel of peace, and not of evil. The evil is not in the counsel; "For God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that in two things

by which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have *strong consolation*." Where, then, do men find despair? Where do they find perdition? Certainly not in the counsel of God; for in this there is nothing but "strong consolation."

God has no counsel *against* the salvation of any sinner. Let some one point out to us where that counsel is revealed. Let some sinner be mentioned who has perished in consequence of such a counsel. The whole counsel of God is for good, and for good only. It says, "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Is it possible that God may have any secret counsel opposed to this public declaration? Has he any decree against his promises? Has he any purpose that contradicts his oath? I trow not. He cannot deny himself.

If nothing else will prove that the decrees of God, are not thoughts of evil, let the condescension of Bethlehem—let the death of Calvary, prove it: believe it for the very work's sake. The Son of God was delivered to death "by the determinate *counsel* and foreknowledge of God." And how did this counsel run? Take a specimen. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." Does the cross, then, express any thoughts of evil against the sinner? No; but it bears an inscription written with the blood of atonement, and addressed to men of all languages, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out."

As the atonement itself is a measure of pure benevolence, it is, as such, a specimen of all the counsels of God. Hear what the author of the atonement, says, "This is the condemnation,"—not that there is a forbidding attribute to destroy man—not that there is a settled decree of reprobation gone forth,—but, "that

light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light."

Hence, it is charged against the Pharisees as a heinous crime, that they "rejected the counsel of God against themselves," to their own ruin. This charge alleges that every thing in the counsel itself is for the benefit of the sinner, and nothing against him; that all the benefits of the counsel are freely and sincerely offered to the acceptance of the sinner; that the sinner voluntarily, but most perversely, rejects these benefits of the counsel; and that such a rejection makes the sinner, and the sinner alone, the author of his own ruin. The purpose, design, and tendency of the atonement, is "NOT to condemn the world, but that the *world* through him might be *saved*." The supposition that there are, notwithstanding, some decrees secretly opposed to this avowed design of the atonement, is unreasonable, improbable, and impossible.

The atonement may be considered, farther, as an expression of the non-interference of the divine decrees with the liberty of moral agents.

The whole work of the atonement, from the incarnation of Christ to his ascension, was accomplished without interfering with the free agency of any one being. Its operation in moral government, and its application to man by the Holy Spirit, are carried on without infringing at all on human liberty. And as is the character of the atonement itself, so is the character of the counsel concerning it.

No advocate of liberty can wish for a freer range for the freedom of the will, than the Jews and the Gentiles had, when the Son of God was engaged in the work of making an atonement; and yet in the whole transaction the counsel of God stands, and free agency is perfectly unconstrained. "For of a truth, against the holy child Jesus, whom God had anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever the hand and the counsel of God had determined before to be done." We

may puzzle ourselves, and puzzle others, by asking with Nicodemus, "how can these things be?" But we should remember, that the demonstration of such problems is not given to scholars on our form, that our work is to search the scriptures "whether these things are so," and to act accordingly. In these scriptures we discover, that the divine decrees did not interfere with the freedom of any person concerned in the murdering and crucifying of Christ.

This non-interference with free agency, the atonement maintains in all its operation and influence in moral government. The gospel exhibits the atonement, as an open medium of reconciliation with God, and as a motive to deter from sin, and persuade to holy obedience. The benefits of the atonement are freely offered to the unconstrained acceptance of every one who hears the gospel. Any acceptance of it that is not free and unconstrained, is not pleasing to God, nor available to the benefit of man. In accepting it, and choosing it, as a motive to holiness, and as a medium of pardon, the believer is free and unconstrained; and in rejecting it as the means of salvation, every sinner acts according to his own free and uninfluenced choice.

When the Holy Spirit opens the heart *to attend* to the claims and influence of the atonement, there is no more violence offered to the freedom of the will, than there was in Christ shewing his wounds to Thomas to make him "not faithless but believing." The atonement effects no change whatever in the laws of liberty. It does not constrain God to exercise mercy: and it does not constrain the sinner to accept of pardon. As this "counsel of God" can be administered without infringing on free agency, it is a sample that all the purposes of God may be so too.

All the works of God are the products of his mind and counsel, and are, therefore, all of the same nature and tendency. The works of God do not contradict his thoughts, nor do his thoughts contradict his works. His works are always the open and sincere expression of his

thoughts and purposes, and as the atonement is one of his chief works, it is an *expression* and a *specimen* of the benevolence of all his decrees, and of their non-interference with the laws of free agency.

SECTION III.

The Atonement a Vindication of the Divine Purposes.

In the history of moral dispensations the divine purposes have been liable to many charges, as having been accessary to the intrusion of sin, as throwing an air of insincerity on divine warnings and invitations, as being arbitrary in determining to communicate gracious influences, and as occasioning the eternal perdition of unbelievers. As God works all things in his government according to the counsel of his own will, it was necessary for the ends of government, that the character of the divine counsels should, not only be explained and illustrated, but be clearly and publicly vindicated.

First. The atonement of Christ vindicates the divine decrees from having been accessary to the intrusion of sin.

Jesus Christ is not a minister of sin, and his atonement is not an apology for sin. There is nothing in the measure of atonement that is designed or calculated to favor sin, or to extenuate its enormity, but every thing to oppose, to destroy and to prevent it. The atonement is a demonstration to the universe, that there never was in the eternal mind a decree accessary to evil, for every thing in its provisions is purposed, and designed, and fitted to suppress all sin. God, indeed, foresaw that evil would intrude into the universe, and he made provisions against its entrance; but his mind and counsels are quite guiltless of it. To vindicate his decrees from the suspicion of any share in evil, he has, at an infinite expense, shewn how repugnant sin was to their order and character, by publicly condemning it in the person of his own Son.

Evil is not the product of mind. Sin is not the result of design and arrangement. Suppose I were to say that the annihilation of the world would be an act of omnipotence; I should be speaking what is absurd; for I should make Almighty power to act—for what? to *do nothing*. It is highly inconsistent to suppose omnipotence in effort or at work to produce—*nothing*. And it is as inconsistent, though we may not perceive the incongruity so distinctly, to suppose evil to be the product of mind, and purpose, and decree in God.

God does nothing but *good*. To purpose *not* to do good is to purpose to do NO-thing, and a purpose *to do* NO-thing is surely NO purpose, NO decree; that is, the absence or the reverse of good is not the product of design, evil is not the result of arrangement. PALEY has observed that in the bodily frame of man there is nothing intended or designed to *produce pain*. Whatever, therefore of pain may be in the human frame, it is not the result of design or purpose. That which is true of the frame of one man, is true of the frame of every man in the world; yes, it is true of the frame of the entire universe. In the whole vast, multifarious, and boundless system, there is not one principle, not one movement arranged, designed, and intended to produce evil.

Suppose an objector, viewing an emaciated man "in sore pain upon his bed," to say, "This pain is not accidental, there must be some cause for it, there must be something in the formation of man, contrived, purposed, and secretly introduced to give pain, which argues the want of benevolence in the author of his frame." We would reply, "No, you are wrong. If you knew well the constitution of man, you would know that there is nothing introduced that is calculated to give pain, there is no sinew, nor muscle, neither gland nor a duct, that is calculated and designed to produce disease. But if your knowledge of the *frame* of man does not convince you of the benevolence of its author, look at the provision of medicinal virtue which he has plentifully

stored in vegetables and in minerals, and in the air and the water around us, and see that all his designs and purposes are—to produce health, and to prevent disease."

If the same objector, viewing the shattered moral constitution of the universe, were to say, "This evil was foreseen, and might have been prevented; its existence, therefore, argues the want of benevolence in the nature or in the purposes of its author." We would again reply, "No, you are wrong. If you knew thoroughly the constitution of the universe, you would know that there is in it no law, no motive, no power, no influence, that is calculated or intended to produce evil. But if your knowledge of the arranged constitution of the universe does not convince you of the benevolence of its Maker, and justify to you the ways of God to man, examine the splendid compensative provision which he has made in the atonement of HIS OWN SON, a measure of pure benevolence and unmixed good."

If we are not to judge of an agent's designs and purposes from the adaptation of his means, the fitness of his actions, and the tendency of his measures, there must be an end to all reasoning, the agent must be either without contrivance, or without sincerity. In the measures of a wise agent, the benevolent tendency of the means is a proof, and a vindication of the benevolent nature and bearings of his purposes. The atonement is a measure of pure benevolence, "set forth" as a vindication of the pure benevolence of the purposes and decrees of God, and of their being guiltless of the origin and of the ravages of sin.

Secondly. The atonement vindicates the divine purposes from the suspicions of throwing an air of insincerity on the invitations of the gospel.

The invitations of the gospel are open, universal, and obligatory; but men constantly abuse them, or neglect them, by undefinable guesses at the nature and the order of the divine decrees. Their sophism generally runs in this way: God has predetermined to whom he will

impart gracious influences to bring them to accept his offers; and since he has not predestinated to do this for all, he cannot sincerely *will* that all should comply with his invitations.

This sophism is grounded upon two suppositions, which are unsound and shallow. It supposes that a *disposition to obey* is indispensably necessary to the accountableness of a sinner, and essential to his *power* of obeying. As if a governor could not justly make any laws which some of the subjects had not the disposition to obey: or, as if no king could make any laws against smuggling, but such as smugglers felt disposed to obey. This view of the case is subversive of all government, as it insinuates that it would be a sufficient apology for disobeying the law or command, if the smuggler said, he *could* not obey it, for he felt no inclination or disposition to submit to it, and therefore it is unjust to make him accountable for it. The above sophism has another glaring error. It supposes that the rule of the subject's homage is not the published enactment of the government, but the private mind, and secret purposes of the king, which, by the bye, is supposed to be at variance with his published and avowed declaration. This stultifies all legislation and all accountableness. Whatever purposes and counsels are unrevealed, they are not among the moral means to be employed by us, and as far as they are unpublished, they are never the rule of human conduct. The decrees published to us in the gospel are not the rule of conduct to the heathen, until they are published to *them;* but the moment they are published, a great and eternal change is made in the measure of their accountableness, and in the rule of their conduct.

In all the concerns of life and business, men never pose themselves about the decrees of eternity. They never consult the eternal decrees to know what trade to pursue, in what town to set up, what physician to call in, what medicine to take, &c. In all such transactions men reason and calculate on the general character,

aspect, adaptation, bearing, and tendency of things, and they regard such arrangements as pretty clearly denoting to them the mind and the purpose of their Maker and providential Governor. In all their speculations and transactions they never make a supposed unrevealed decree their rule, because "the bow in the cloud" vindicates the purposes of God from any suspicion of hostility to their "seed time and harvest time." Let us be as wise in our generation; and in our spiritual transactions believe, that the atonement of Christ vindicates all the decrees of God from any aspect opposed to the published declaration, "Him that cometh I will nowise cast out."

The purposes or decrees of God are revealed and published in the nature, tendency, and meaning of the things which he commands, or offers, or prohibits. To suppose any design or purpose opposite to these, is to suppose the most horrible monstrosity in the universe,—God contradicting himself.

It is true that in numerous instances the *event* is very different from the design and purpose declared. In a moral government, during an economy of probation in which millions of free agents are at work, such a difference and such a failure are to be expected. This assertion may sound startling, but try to evade it as you may, you can *not* avoid the conclusion, that the moral government of free agents in a state of trial, *must* be susceptible of failures. It is a FACT that such failures have taken place; and to attempt to wrest or alter this fact, is to try to change the universe.

The will of God is publicly revealed for public ends, and it is impossible to shew what private ends he can have, that are opposed to his public avowals. The universe is a public commonwealth. Of this commonwealth God is the public head, and chief member. In administering its affairs he does every thing in his official capacity and public character, as the Governor of it. All the measures proposed and executed in it are for the public good of the whole commonwealth. In its

government every wrong and every sin is treated, not as a private offence, but as a public injury, to be publicly noticed, whether in punishment or in pardon. As the public and official organ of this moral commonwealth, God has announced his purposes, requirements, prohibitions, offers, and invitations.

These form his PUBLIC WILL: public, not in opposition to secret, but in opposition to private or unofficial. I call this public will, as I call the great principle on which divine moral government is administered public justice; as consulting the public good of the commonwealth, as well as the private interests of individuals.

The atonement of Christ is a public vindication of this public will from any suspicion of insincerity. In the atonement all the promises, invitations and offers, are yea and amen in Christ, to the glory of the divine character and purposes. The nature of God, as the God of truth in real works and words of verity—the accurate adaptation of the provision to the case of the sinner—the actual experience of every applicant at the door of mercy—the perpetuation of gracious offers and invitations in the world, after so many forfeitures—the pressing earnestness with which men are invited and courted to accept them—the aggravated and sorer punishment which befals those who refuse them—and the worthy name and character of the Mediator, who reveals and confirms all these by his death; all these are "things in which it is impossible for God to lie," and which impress upon all his proposals and overtures the image and superscription of verily undissembling sincerity.

To suppose that the atonement is only a semblance of benevolence and love, put forth to impose on mankind, to mock the applicant, or to tantalize the inquiring penitent, is "to trample under foot the blood of the everlasting covenant." In the atonement there is provision purposely intended for all, and all are sincerely invited to partake of it freely. The all-sufficiency of the atonement is the foundation laid for the universal invitations of the gospel. An *all*-sufficiency, not in-

tended for *all* who are invited to partake of it, is such an awful imposture that I grudge the ink that mentions it in connection with "the gospel of TRUTH."

If the atonement do not prove the faithfulness and sincerity of God, where shall we look for proof. Should we not shudder at the very surmise of God's using a mental reservation in the atonement of his own Son? and in the offers and invitations and assurances of his grace. Was the blessed Savior himself insincere in his laborious toil, his bloody sweat or ignominious death? No, he was full of grace and *truth*. If the character of God for sincerity, and the character of a theological system for consistency, come in competition, which must give way? In a well-ordered mind there cannot be a moment's hesitation. Let us rather renounce our theological systems, or confess our ignorance of the whole of the case, than suspect for a moment any mental reservation, insincerity, and dissimulation, either in the divine invitations, or in the divine purposes and counsels. In the atonement God has given a public testimony of his truth and sincerity; and "he that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true;" and let God be true, though all human theologians were liars.

Thirdly. The atonement vindicates the divine purposes from the charge of capricious arbitrariness and partiality, in the determination to impart sovereign and gracious influences.

The Bible asks the question, "Who maketh thee to differ?" On the answer to this question hang all the controversies in polemical theology. The Bible itself answers this question, "Unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, to believe on him." "God worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." "God giveth the increase." That the difference in the spiritual conditions of men, and the change in men's hearts, is produced by divine influences, is asserted by the whole scripture, and is recognized in every one's prayers, though not in every one's creed.

It ought not to escape notice, that it is only in the transaction of saving a sinner, that men dare ask God, "Why doest thou this?" God has not "seen it good" to give a detailed account of this matter, or to answer the question, except, indeed with a warning voice, "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" Nevertheless, he has introduced into his government the measure of atonement to be an *interpretation* of his purposes, and a vindication of his counsels against suspicions of unjust speciality, or unreasonable sovereignty.

The exercise of a sovereign speciality in the application of the atonement is indisputable. No hypothesis that admits the death of Christ to be an atonement, can deny this. There are in its application three instances of speciality which are signal, broad, and evident. There is a speciality in its application to *mankind*, to the exclusion of fallen angels. There is a speciality in its application to *believers*, to the exclusion of its rejecters. There is a third speciality, in the application of its benefits more largely to *some believers* than others, in proportion to their works and labors for Christ. I shall not enter now on a consideration of these subjects, as it will be more in place when we come to the chapter on the atonement in its relation to the work of the Spirit.

Here we have three well defined, indisputable instances of sovereign speciality in the application of the benefits of the death of Christ: What shall we do with them? How shall we evade them? They are not capricious, for they are the uniform laws observed in the application of the atonement. Shall we say that they are unjust, and that God has exercised a prerogative, in dispensing his favors, to which he had no right? Try it. Did you ever think that for God to take mercy on man, was really a *wrong* to the devils? Was converting Saul of Tarsus an evil in itself, and a *wrong* to all the pharisees? Is conferring gracious honors bountifully upon those who have sown bountifully, a wrong to those who have sown sparingly? Again, I say, here they are, three

prominent, stubborn, immoveable, and imperishable facts of speciality; what will you do with them? Betake yourself to the feet of Jesus Christ, and there learn to say, "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." If there be no evil, injury, or wrong in the actual, practical, and tangible exercise of this speciality, there can be no evil, injury, or wrong, in purposing and determining thus to exercise it.

It may, perhaps, be surmised by some, that the determination to apply the atonement with this speciality was partial and capricious. Let us briefly consider the state of the case between God and man. God has a claim to the whole existence and to the entire service of man. Man, by sinning, revolts from these claims. Though man refuses these claims, God still maintains and defends them. God, as moral governor, is not bound to give to a revolting subject a *disposition* to own his claims. The punishment of a revolter is *due* to the governor, for the ends of good government. The punishment due may be suspended, provided the ends of government be not thereby weakened; that is, provided some measure or expedient can be introduced, which will answer the same ends as the punishment of the criminal. Such a measure we have asserted the atonement of Christ to be—a measure devised and instituted by God himself.

Here let us pause, and think—Can the moral governor justly arrange and determine, that this compensative measure shall not be altogether in vain—that it shall not entirely fail of the purposes for which it was introduced? What being or person will God wrong or injure by such a determination? Which of his attributes would be clouded by it? Would a greater good be secured, and more certainly secured, without such a determination? Would there have been less danger of the perdition of souls? Would men have been more sure of being saved? Would Christ have been more sure of his rewards, had such a determination been excluded from the divine counsels? These are questions not to be

blinked. You must allow that in saving man, God either acts according to a plan and determination, or he has planned and determined what is wrong.

I wish to offer one suggestion more, before I dismiss this momentous subject. I feel perfectly assured that God's determination to exercise his prerogative to prevent the utter failure of the atonement, was consistent with his justice, mercy, and wisdom; but I wish to suggest, whether the stupendous dignity and worth of the atonement, do not supply honorable grounds for determining that such a glorious measure should not entirely fail of its great ends. The various dispensations of probation are various experiments in moral government, in which God submits his own plans and ways to the acceptance and for the use of free agents. If any object to the word "experiment" I beg to refer them for the meaning of it to the parable of the barren fig-tree, and to that of the husbandman sending his servants, and afterwards his son to the vineyard. These dispensations or experiments are capable of failure. The Eden experiment failed—and the Sinai experiment failed. Such susceptibility of failure has been shewn to be incidental to a moral government and a state of trial. As an infallible remedy will fail to cure a person who refuses to take it, so may the atonement fail to profit a man that seeks justification by works. But there is in the atonement a dignity, a worth, and a merit to deserve in the estimation of God that it shall not entirely fail, but have a glorious accomplishment. Its worth is sufficient to justify a determination in the counsels of God, that he will sovereignly interfere to dispose many of the revolters to return to their allegiance; and also sufficient to exculpate such a determination from the charge of partiality or capriciousness.

Fourthly. The atonement of Christ is a vindication of the divine purposes from the suspicion of having been the cause, or the occasion, of the perdition of the rejecters of the gospel.

Every one will allow, that the advocates of sovereign predestination have used very incautious language upon this subject, partly to exalt the freedom of divine grace, and partly to impress the unbeliever with the certainty of his condemnation. Of this incautious language, the opponents have made a most abundant use, and, it is to be observed, that generally the doctrine of predestination is attacked, as it has been represented by the most incautious writers. Many writers have written against the divine decrees as represented by Toplady, Hawker, Vaughan of Leicester, &c., but none against President Edwards, Dr. Edward Williams, Andrew Fuller, &c. Indeed, I might say that there is scarcely one author who has written against predestination to life: all the attacks have been directed against a decree of reprobation, which, as a human and unscriptural doctrine, has been found more easily assailable.

The divine purposes have been sometimes represented as the cause of a sinner's perdition. Such representations may have been made to demonstrate to the sinner the infallible certainty of his condemnation, under the impression that making his destruction to be a subject of inexorable decree, he would see the impossibility of avoiding it.

As it is a general impression that an event to be certain must be decreed, I crave the indulgence of a few lines, even at the charge of metaphysical prolixity, to shew that *an event may be certain without being decreed.* The difference between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, is certain, without being decreed; for no decree can possibly make it otherwise. Things are not right merely *because* God does them, but He does them because they are right, and right irrespective of any decree to make them so. The whole is greater than its part: two straight lines cannot inclose a space: one and two will not make four: if two mountains are created, there must be a valley between them. No decree can make these things otherwise. If God produce a creature, that creature must be inferior to the Creator.

This cannot be the result of a decree, for no decree can alter it; and none will say that God can decree to create a being equal to himself. The dependence of the creature, then, on the Creator, is an event certain, and yet not decreed. If such a created dependent being be separated, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, from its supporter, the result will be ruin. This ruin, whether physical or moral, cannot be the result of a decree, for no decree can make a creature to be independent of its creator.

Let us now apply these clear principles. By sin man falls voluntarily from his dependence on the Creator, consequently moral ruin is perfectly certain without being ascribed to the divine decrees. This moral ruin is another word for all the miseries of sin. The evils of sin are not contrivances of God, for they would have been the same had we never heard of the divine decrees. Let us suppose a case. A man, by lies and falsehoods, brings himself into trammels and difficulties exceedingly detrimental and injurious to his personal interests. He is not to blame divine providence and the divine decrees that such are the natural consequences of falsehood, for no decree can make them otherwise. Divine decrees may interfere to prevent the consequences from taking place, but they never can make it that such consequences will not arise from lying. And surely such a sovereign prevention in any given case, is not the cause or the occasion why the natural consequences of lying, actually take place in other instances. The liar himself is alone to be blamed. This reasoning is applicable to every other sin as well as to lying. If there be one doctrine in the scripture more clear than another, it is that the destruction of the well being of man is entirely of himself, irrespective of any decree. After all, the friends and the opponents of predestination agree, that *nothing worse* shall befal any sinner, than JUSTICE.

These metaphysical principles are fully borne out by tangible FACTS which take place now in the present administration of moral government. Within our own

observation, there have been persons on whom the wisest and the best means of improvement have been used in vain. These persons fully know their duty and their master's will, yet habitually live in sin. They have been on the bed of sickness, and nigh unto death; their remorse was excruciating, they earnestly prayed for respite, and vowed that on the restoration of health they would lead very different lives: they have recovered, and have been more hardened and reckless in sin than ever. These things have occurred to them again and again: and now all say that they seem as if given up of God to the hardness of their own hearts. This is, alas! a very common case. But when such language is used concerning such a sinner, is there any impression that such a giving up is *unrighteous?* Does any one think that such a hardened character is the result of any divine decree? No: every candid and holy mind may indeed view such a character as a case for his pity, but also for blame and reprehension. This case is not solitary. It is the case of every sinner that has ever perished. It is the case of every instance of reprobation, a reprobation not the result of divine decrees, but the natural result of a character hardened in wrong, "to love darkness rather than light, because his deeds were evil."

As a vindication of this character of the divine purposes, the atonement is "set forth." There is no reprobation in the atonement. The atonement in its design and in its aspect, in its testimony and in its influence, has no reprobation in it. It is a propitiation for the sins of the whole world; it is a testimony of love "to the world," and consists in a "death for every man." The blood that speaketh better things, never speaks reprobation. It speaks salvation in every syllable. It speaks and pleads for pardon in every case, and on every application. There are indeed some cases which are not pleaded by the blood of Christ, but there is not a single case reprobated by it. The cases not pleaded by him are those which sinners *refuse* to entrust him with; the Intercessor himself rejects none. Every drop of the

blood of atonement says, "Reprobation is not in me." An atonement exhibited to vindicate absolute reprobation, would convulse the universe.

SECTION IV.

The Extent of the Atonement explained by the character of the Divine Purposes.

The advocates of a limited atonement have always appealed to the divine purposes as the impregnable defences of particular salvation. The real state of the question, I deem to be this—Did the Father will, and did the Son design, that the atonement should be a medium of salvation to all men, or to a select chosen number only?

The question is not to be decided by the *event*, but by the nature of a "design" in a moral government. Thus were we to inquire whether Jehovah *designed* that the moral law published on Sinai should preserve all the Jews, in his service and worship—no one would answer and decide the question by the *event*, without reflecting unfavorably on the sincerity of the divine character. We may justly say that a thing is *designed* to produce and secure any end, when it is fitted and adapted to it, though eventually it may fail of it. The arrangement with Adam in the garden of Eden was adapted, and consequently designed, to keep him from falling. The event indeed was otherwise, but the purpose was sincere and real. So the atonement of Christ is adapted, and therefore designed, to save man from sin, though the event in numerous instances may be otherwise. Some will not come unto him that they might have life, they will not have him to rule over them, they neglect their great salvation, and tread under foot the blood wherewith they were atoned, and deny and reject the Lord that bought them.

Commercial views of the atonement of Christ engender sentiments about the divine decrees unfavorable to

the character of divine veracity. If the atonement consist in the literal suffering of the real penalty due to a certain number of offenders, it is evident that the identical penalty due to *the others* has not been suffered, and consequently that there is no provision whatever made and designed for *their* salvation. This commercial atonement gives the sinner no alternative. The penalty must be suffered before he can be saved; and if Christ has not suffered it for him, he must suffer it himself; and if he suffer it himself he will not survive it, he will be lost—and lost because the quantum of his punishment was not enumerated in the amount of penalties allotted for atonement. Yet he is condemned and punished for not availing himself of the sufferings of Christ as the means of his salvation, whereas, according to the true verity of the case, these sufferings were never provided or intended, or designed to be at all available for *him:* it was never decreed that Christ should profit him. If the divine purposees run thus, the universal aspect of the atonement is an imposing semblance; the urgent general call of the gospel is serious trifling; and the condemnation for unbelief—for not believing what was really not true,—for rejecting what he verily was never welcome to,—such a condemnation is an enormity, for which all the languages of the globe have no epithet.

The friends of a particular and limited atonement argue that the Father's election, and the Son's redemption, are of the same extent, or relate to the same individual persons, to all such, and to none else: so that all the chosen people are redeemed, and all the redeemed are the chosen to salvation. They also plead that there is not in the scriptures the least intimation that Christ's redemption either exceeds or falls short of the Father's election, in one single instance or individual person.

The fallacy of this argument is in the word "redemption." This word has various meanings. Redemption means, either the ransom price, or the price of redemption—or it means, the act of paying down that price;—

or else, by metonymy, it means the *effect* of such a payment, meaning the *state* produced by such a ransoming. This effect in the case of a sinner is, a state of forgiveness, acceptance with God, and admission to heaven. In the above argument the *effect* of paying the ransom price is confounded with the *act* of paying it. In the argument, "redemption" means the effect, the final result of paying the price. This final result of the atonement will not derange any of the plans of God, as to his determination to exercise sovereign speciality in the application of the atonement. Our question is, was the act of paying the ransom price by Christ designed to be available to all, so "that the world through him *might* be saved," or only designed for a certain chosen number. We say fearlessly, that the *final results* of the atonement will only be realized by those who receive Christ, and to whom it has been given to believe in him; but the act of making that atonemennt, and the offer of the benefits of the atonement are designed and purposed to be a medium of salvation to all men, without excluding one individual. If the word "redemption" be taken in the sense of "actual salvation," then Christ's redemption neither exceeds, nor falls short of, the Father's election. If "redemption" be taken in the sense of paying down the ransom price, or a valuable and honorable consideration, as a medium for delivering sinners, then Christ's redemption and the Father's election are not commensurate and of equal extent, taking "the Father's election" as meaning the will of God revealed in the final results of the atonement. It is supposed, even by our Savior himself, that the result will not be commensurate with the gracious design of God, and with the large aspect of the atonement. God loved the world, and gave his Son, that the world through him might be saved—but it is only whosoever believeth in him, it is he only that will answer the design, and share in the result of the atonement. The atonement is a measure of government, not of private love and friendship, but of a public commonwealth. In such a public measure, the public will of the Father, as moral

governor, and the public design and intent of Christ, as mediator, are commensurate. God willeth all men to be saved, therefore Christ gave himself a ransom for all.

From the divine purposes, the advocates of a limited atonement argue, that since Christ foreknew the results of the atonement, and since he foreknew who would believe in him, why should he die and lavish his blood for those who, he knew, would not believe in him.

This argument is founded on three things, which are wrong, and inconsistent with moral government. It is supposed, first, that foreknowledge is the rule of Christ's conduct and actions; secondly, that to save believers was the chief end of his sufferings; and, thirdly, that his death consisted in suffering the identical punishment due to sinners; for it supposes, that he would not knowingly suffer the punishment of those, who, he knew, should suffer the punishment themselves. If the question be repeated, *Why* did he suffer for those, whom he knew to be sure to prove unbelievers? The reply is, he suffered to vindicate the character of God in offering pardon to them—and he suffered, to shew how inexcusable they would be in their own destruction.

But why should this foreknowledge be confined to the *atonement* of Christ only? The Lord Jesus Christ knew that his own would receive him not, yet he came to them. He knew that the Jews would reject the overtures of his ministry, yet he said, and he said it with tears of regret, that he would oft have gathered them. He knew that many would neglect his great salvation, yet he gave himself a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. I might remark, in passing, that he would not have foreknown that any would disbelieve in him, without foreknowing that they would have the offer, the warrant, and the opportunity to believe in him, and that the ground of such an offer and warrant was his own death for them.

Another argument from the character of the divine decrees to maintain particular atonement is, that a general atonement throws an air of uncertainty around the plans

and the purposes of God and of disappointment around the travails of the soul of Christ.

It must be remembered that we are concerned in the divine decrees, only as they are administered within the circle of moral government: and that beyond that line they are "secret things," unrevealed, and belonging to God only. Within this boundary, it should not be evaded nor blinked, that the divine plans are susceptible of failures. When God by Isaiah remonstrates with the Jewish church, and asks, "What could I have done more?" it is implied that all the measures which had been used, had failed of their ends. It is implied in the sentiments of Jesus Christ himself, when he supposes his Father to say, "They will reverence my Son," though after all he was slain and murdered. It is therefore a morbid squeamishness that makes us afraid to avow what are daily matters of fact. This failure has taken place in creation—it was made "very good," but now is groaning and travailing together in pain. It takes place in providence, for in it God has determined the bounds of men's habitation, that they might seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him; but they are all gone astray, every one in his own way. It takes place in the atonement; Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto him who died for them—but many deny the Lord that bought them, and renounce his reign over them.

It is sometimes vauntingly asked, "Where does the scriptures speak of Christ's death, and the ends of it, in terms of uncertainty; or represent him as coming short of his aim and intention in dying for sinners?" In Heb. iv. 1, the apostle warns some who might seem to come short for the rest of the people of God. God has no rest to offer to any sinner but through the death of Christ. To fall short of it is a possible case, and no one can fall short of a thing that was never provided and intended for him. This rest could not have been provided but through the death of Christ. It is a supposable case that an uncharitable Christian may "destroy him for

whom Christ died," and cause a "weak brother to perish, for whom Christ died;"—that men may deny the Lord that bought them, and bring *destruction* upon themselves.

I may here be interrogated, "How do you reconcile the liableness to failure in the divine measures, with the certainty that God's counsel shall stand, and that he will do his pleasure?"

I state at once, most frankly and distinctly, that I do not know how to reconcile them. I believe it is not my duty to reconcile them; and that to be able to reconcile them, is not necessary to make me to answer the great ends of my probation here. The present administration is not the time and place to reconcile them. A belief in particular atonement does not at all remove the difficulty. A limited atonement may seem to tally with the certainty of the actual and final results of the death of Christ, but it clashes most gratingly against the indisputable verities, the universal aspect of the atonement, the sincere invitations of the gospel, and the sorer punishment of unbelievers. This difficulty cannot be avoided by escaping to any other creed. It presses on the Heathen and the Mahometan, upon the Jew and the Christian. Philosophers, metaphysicians, and theologians, have endeavored with Herculean labors, to push this subject up to light and distinctness; but after all, like the stone of Sisyphus, it rolls back to its own awful mystery and dread profundity. There never was a creed on the face of the earth, and there exists not a creed, that accounts for the difficulty. Yes, there is *one*, but it is a creed so severely simple, so unsophisticated with metaphysical reasonings, and so unamalgamating with theological systems, that few deign to take it up; it is the creed of Jesus Christ, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight,"—the creed that "judges nothing before the time,"—the creed that sings,

> "God is his own interpreter,
> And he will make it plain."

CHAPTER V.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO ALL THE WORKS OF GOD.

By "all the works of God" I understand, all the productions of God, called the works of his hands, and which the Psalmist calls "all the places of his dominions," and which the New Testament calls "heavenly places," that is, the whole universe, with all its intelligences and orders, ranks and dignities.

The New Testament reveals very clearly that the great atonement of the Son of God is related to other worlds in the divine empire, as well as to our world. It is, therefore, necessary to a full and enlarged consideration of the extent of the atonement, to examine and survey it in this aspect and relation.

I feel happy to be able to introduce my sentiments upon the aspect of the atonement on the universe in the following passage, of great beauty and sublimity, from LORD BACON. "I believe that God is so holy, pure, and jealous, that it is impossible for him to be pleased in any creature, though the works of his own hands: so that neither angels, man, nor WORLD would stand, or can stand, one moment in his eye, without [his] beholding the same IN THE FACE OF A MEDIATOR. And therefore [I believe] that before him, with whom all things are present, *the Lamb of God was slain* before all worlds; but that out of his eternal and infinite goodness and love, purposing to become a Creator, and to communicate to his creatures, he ordained in his eternal counsel, that one person of the Godhead should be

united to *one* nature, and to one particular of his creatures, so that *in the person* of the Mediator, the true ladder may be fixed, whereby God might descend to his creatures, and his creatures might ascend to God; so that God by *the reconcilement of the Mediator*, turning his countenance towards his creatures (though not in equal light and degree) *made way* unto the dispensation of his most holy and sacred will; whereby some of his creatures might stand and keep their state; others might possibly fall and be restored, and others might fall and not be restored to their estate, but yet remain in being, though under wrath and corruption: ALL WITH RESPECT TO THE MEDIATOR, which is the great mystery and PERFECT CENTRE OF ALL GOD'S WAYS with his creatures, and to which ALL HIS OTHER WORKS AND WONDERS do but serve and refer."*

SECTION I.

The Constitution of the Universe Meditorial.

The whole universe is represented in the word of God, as a beautiful and glorious system, adjusted around the mediation of Jesus Christ, in which he should be felt as a central orb, to attract all its portions into union and harmony, and to maintain all its dependencies in beauty and order.

God by his gospel has made known to us "the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him," Eph. i, 9, 10. To apply this language to the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles only, is to render the passage turgid and inane. As if designedly to guard against such an interpretation of his meaning, the apostle in his letter to the Colossians,

* Bacon's Works, vol. iv, p. 413.

written at the same time as that to the Ephesians, distinctly enumerates the intelligences of the universe as intended by "the all things gathered together in Christ." "By him (the Mediator) were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; *all things* were created by him and *for* him; and he is before all things, and *by him all things* consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in *all* things he might have pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and having made peace (or atonement) through the blood of his cross, *by* HIM to reconcile (or to harmonize) *all things* unto himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." Col. i. 16—20.

It is impossible, I think, to read these passages without a vivid impression of the wide and expanded views, which the apostle had of the atonement, as sustaining a high and intimate relation to all the length and breadth, the height and the depth of the universe of God.

It is this relation of the atonement to the universe that gives life and glory to the prophet Malachi's enraptured view of "the Sun of Righteousness." The more I consider this vision of the last Seer of Israel, the more I am entranced with his splendid emblem of the high dignity, and of the diffusive influence of the Lord from heaven. This symbol, though the most noble and brilliant which the creation could supply, can but very dimly image forth the grandeur and beauty of "the Sun of Righteousness." By the light of astronomy the sun is viewed, not merely as a luminary suspended in the heavens, but as the centre of a system of worlds, and the source of light and heat, of motion and harmony to them all. By the light of revealed theology, also, we are taught to view the great atoning Mediator, not only as a "light to lighten the Gentiles," but as the centre of an immense moral system, composed of all existences, constitutions, and dispensations, shedding his beams to

bless dependent worlds, and bathing the whole in the effulgence of his loveliness and glory.

This imagery of Malachi teaches us that God contemplated a beautiful and immense system of good dispensations, called here a system of Righteousness; that in the midst of this system of Righteousness as the central orb, he placed the Lord Jesus Christ; and that the revolutions of this system have a most benign and "healing" aspect on the interests of our world.

A further enlargement on this topic will not be deemed necessary, especially since, in the first section of the chapter on the purposes of God, I have explained in what manner I regard the constitution of the universe as partaking of a mediatorial arrangement. Consecutiveness of plan, seemed to me to require a distinct, though a brief, notice of this subject here.

Only one more illustration will be introduced to explain the connection that exists between the atonement and the universe. The apostle Paul speaks of the universe as a commonwealth, or family receiving its designation, constitution, and happiness from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is felt and owned every where, as the head of power and of influence. "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." This public commonwealth or family consists of "an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; God the Judge of all; the spirits of just men made perfect; Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant"—all in intimate connection with "the blood that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel." Gal. iii, 15. Heb. xii, 22—24.

SECTION II.

The atonement a subject of interest and benefit to the intelligences of the Universe.

The scriptures represent the intelligences of the universe as having been informed of the atonement, as hav-

ing been witnesses and spectators of the whole amazing transaction. They take a high interest in its administration, and are greatly benefitted by its provisions.

The blessed God regards the expedient of the atonement as so fit a medium for giving a full display of the divine glories, that he reveals it to be the ground for creating the universe. He "created all things by Jesus Christ, *to the intent*, that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by [*means of*] the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. iii. 9—11.

The whole immense progress of the Mediator's career, from the throne to the manger, and from the manger to the cross, was "seen of angels." They were spectators of his public entrance into heaven after finishing his atoning work: and they were witnesses of his splendid triumph over spiritual wickedness in high places, when "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made *a shew* of them openly, triumphing over them" in his cross and atonement.

These intelligences are now daily made acquainted with all the instances of conversion from sin to holiness among the sinners of our world. And they are informed of the progressive improvement which believers make in Christian character, and of the maturity of the Christian graces which has ripened them for "Abraham's bosom." The apostle Peter says, that angels generally (not *the* angels,) meaning all heavenly intelligences, take a high interest, complacency and delight in these subjects. He enumerates the salvation of man, the inquiries of the prophets, the sovereign grace of God, the work of the Spirit, the sufferings and glory of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel, as the "things which angels *desire* to look into." The original phrase is expressive of the intense energy and keen relish, with which they inquire into the doctrine of the atonement, and its relations. "Likewise there is *joy* in the pres-

ence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth."

As intelligent, holy, and benevolent beings, the atonement in all its designs and influences must be a source of pleasure to them. As intelligent beings they take an interest in the atonement, from the circumstance that it is a measure in which the Father of wisdom and mind is "well pleased," and over which he "joys with singing." It is a subject, in grandeur and immensity, suited to the keen penetration, and the large comprehension of their glorious minds. The atonement as the ground and medium of an immense accession of good to the universe, cannot fail to interest and delight their minds, as amiable and benevolent beings. Neither of these aspects of the atonement, however, would be desirable to their minds, were it void of a holy character. Because they are holy themselves, they rejoice in the atonement on account of the demonstration which it gives of the evil of sin; on account of its public expression of the beauty of divine holiness; on account of its vicarious virtue to expiate and sanctify guilty and sinful men; and on account of its practical tendency to deter accountable beings from sin, and to melt the hard heart to repentance. This diffuses "joy in their presence," because that by repentance, through the atonement, the sinner is coming back into order and harmony with the universe; that his repentance is reasonable, and due to the divine government; that by this process he is introduced into the circle of happiness and fellowship with God; and that eventually, he is to join them for ever as an associate in glory, and sharer in their joy.

If there be such "joy" among these intelligences now in their inquiries into this stupendous measure; if they are so delighted and entranced with its present unfoldings, developements, and evolutions, how will they be ravished with the glory of its splendid consummation. The apostle John represents them, as in that auspicious period, thrilling the vast universe with their rapturous songs. "And I beheld and heard the voice of many

angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen." Rev. v, 11—14

The information which is communicated to the intelligences of other worlds, concerning the mediatorial transactions, *in* the church, and *for* the church, is intended to affect themselves, and to have a practical influence upon them as subjects of the divine government. Their great minds are capable of enlargement by exercise, of advancement in knowledge, and of growth in their love and admiration of the character of God. Their study of the atonement is calculated to strengthen their confidence in the righteousness and benevolence of the divine government, and to give them a clear insight into the heinous enormity of revolt and transgression. When they see the tremendous evil of sin, set forth in the sufferings of the Mediator, they perceive the justice of the eternal destruction for sin of their former compeers in glory, and feel high gratitude to sovereign grace for their own preservation in bliss. In their contemplation of what the mediatorial President has done for the universe, they feel themselves united more nearly and dearly to the system of which He is the centre and the glory: and they feel prompt and unshrinking to undertake any service, in his work, after his illustrious example. Probably by the information which they receive from the atonement, they become more aware and sensible of the value and worth of their own dignity and glory. Gabriel never knew the worth of his harp and crown, till he saw at what immense cost, the lost harp

and crown of a sinner were ransomed, among the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary.

The Intelligences of other worlds are positively benefitted by sharing in the blessings of the atonement. "He that descended, is the same also that ascended up *far above all heavens*, that he might fill all things." In this passage the blessed Redeemer may be considered either as taking his place, as the central Sun, in the midst of a vast system of heavenly places, to every part of which he diffused light and heat; or as, in his ascending progression, passing on his way to his throne, worlds upon worlds, and systems upon systems, strown amid "all heavens," scattering his blessings all around, and sanctifying and baptizing every world with "the blood of sprinkling." With what can he "fill all things in all heavens" but with the blessings of his mediatorial grace? It is to this the apostle refers when he speaks of "spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." This proves that the inhabitants of "heavenly places," the intelligences who occupy all the celestial orbs of the universe, actually *have* "spiritual blessings," and that these "spiritual blessings" are enjoyed "in" and through Christ.

It is not to be supposed that these intelligences are benefitted in the atonement, as it is a ransom for redemption from sin, for they never needed a deliverance: but they are benefitted by it, as it is the medium of all divine communications. God has no medium, no way of blessing any being, in any world, but the mediation of Christ; and the whole circle of his mediation is around his atonement.

The benefits which they have derived through the provision of atonement are such as are fitted to their nature, rank, and character. They have had a greater nearness to their Maker who has made an approach to them in a created nature. They have a more enlarged acquaintance with the character of God in the various evolutions, in the full and free exercise, and, in the beautiful and glorious harmony of all the divine perfections.

The application of their energies, and the employment of their ministry have been chiefly directed to the execution of the messages of mercy and grace. As social and benevolent beings they must regard it as a benefit to be having accessions of ransomed and holy companions, who will partake with them in the honors of the "heavenly places," and who will unite with them in the services and praises of God and of the Lamb for ever and ever.

SECTION III.

Christ the President of the Universe on the ground of his Atonement.

The Scriptures speak of Jesus Christ as being the president of all the ranks and grades of being in the universe. "God has set him at his own right hand *in the heavenly places*, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

We have such an High Priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty *in the heavens*, "a MINISTER of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man." Heb. viii, 2. Dr. John Owen has labored much to shew that "the sanctuary and the true tabernacle" here, mean the human nature of the Son of God: but the whole context, and the train of argument, make it evident that the apostle is speaking of the *place* into which Jesus has entered, that is, "into the heavenly places," or "heaven itself." In the "heavenly places," Christ sits, the PUBLIC MINISTER, the "*antistes sacrorum*,"*—the official organ, "*qui publicis officis præest*,"†—the president

*Ernesti, and Dr. Pye Smith. †Professor Moses Stuart.

over all the employments, offices, and services of all the heavenly intelligences.

It is not, I conceive, the philosophy of NEWTON only, that teaches us the doctrine of plurality of worlds; the illustrious President of the universe himself has said, "In my Father's house are many mansions." The "Father's house" is the vast temple of the universe, and the "many mansions," are the innumerable stars, and suns, and systems which compose its apartments. These stars are not mansions of untenanted glory, nor provinces of luxuriant wastes in the divine empire. They are "heavenly *places*," in which are thrones, and principalities, and powers, and dominions, to which the manifested wisdom of God is made known by the church. This scriptural enumeration of ranks and dignities, is not a series of high sounding and pompous titles without meaning and without verity. It is a list of real offices, of actual employments, and of public services.

In our speck of world we see every speck of matter teeming with life, activity, and employment. The microscope has its hades of living existences, as well as the telescope. It is therefore unnatural, unreasonable, and unscriptural to regard "all heavens" as solitudes of majesty, or deserts of beauty. On the supposition that all these gradations and orders of intelligences are in active employments, and in useful service, it enlarges our conceptions of the official dignity and glory of Jesus Christ, to see him "wear the crown as Lord of all," the "head of all principality and power," in all things having the pre-eminence, as President over all.

The state of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven is, indeed, one of transcendent glory and power, but it is also a state of office, of mediatorial care and authority, and of plenipotentiary administration over the entire universe.

He directs and regulates all their services and employments by his mediatorial authority. It is he who gives to every one his work, and allots to every one his sphere of employment. "In his name" every knee

bows, of things in heaven and things in earth. He has a name "above" every name in heavenly authority and influence. It is by him that all things consist, whether they be principalities, or powers, or thrones, or dominions. What keeps all these provinces, with their innumerable intelligences, in order, at their proper work, without clashing, and without anarchy? It is mediatorial power; it is the influence of the atonement. It is "by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

All these services are rendered acceptable to God by the merits of the Mediator. Christ is as a Lamb slain in the midst of the throne; and all the services that come to the throne have a reference to the Lamb of atonement that is in the midst of it. The Mediator by his intercession presents the services of all the subjects of the empire publicly to his heavenly Father. In his official character Christ is the Receiver General of all the revenues of God's immense empire, and as the mediatorial President he presents them to God. He entered heaven, not to receive glory only, but to *do* temple-work. It is his work, as the public officer of the moral commonwealth, to present to God all the revenue of service and glory received from all the provinces, and gathered together under his mediatorial inspection. In this office and work, he is the representative of the universe, but more especially of the church, transacting publicly all its affairs with God.

As the official President, it is his temple-work to recompense all these services by his sovereign grace. He has ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things, and bring all worlds into the light and the "joy of their Lord." In the day when the mediatorial administration of things shall come to its splendid close, all intelligences, angels and men, shall be marshalled from their heavenly places, and gathered before him, as the great President; they shall receive their crowns from the hand that was nailed to the cross; and in love and homage, they will cast their diadems at his feet, and

ascribe all their magnificent rewards to his sovereign bounty and love.

This mediatorial presidency of Christ shews the connection of his atonement with all the works of God. His atonement is the ground of his government over the universe. The mediatorial glory of Christ is an official glory that *followed* his sufferings. His crown is linked to his cross He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; *wherefore* God highly exalted him to the Universal Presidency. Christ is not head over all things irrespectively of his atonement, any more than he can be Head of the church irrespectively of it. The Son of God has no mediatorial power in heaven or earth, but what arises from his atonement, and is connected with it.

The atonement, accomplished in this world, extends its relations and influences to other worlds, as is evident by the conveyance of the blessings of other worlds to ours. Our world, by sin, had attempted to snap the connection between it and the centre and source of all blessing, but mediatorial influences have preserved it. Now God blesses our world with *the* spiritual blessings of the *heavenly places*, and he blesses us and them, only "in Christ." The atonement is the ground and medium of the ministry of angels in our world. As revolters we had every thing to dread from the employment of their agency, as subjects of high and unbending loyalty to the offending king. In the mediation of Christ they and we are become the subjects of the same presidency; they are the friends of man, and ministering spirits to the saints. They defend us from our spiritual adversaries, and execute the "charge" given to them concerning us through life. They rejoice in our accession to the church of Christ, and assembly of the firstborn; and they will, in due time, convey our ransomed and sanctified spirits safe home to glory. The actual admission of men into the "heavenly places," shews that the atonement is connected with "all heavens." It shews that the keys which open the door to them are in

benevolent hands. Many myriads of sinners have already passed thither from the land of great tribulation —but they all arrived safely, only "through the blood of the Lamb." Heaven would not have been open and accessible to sinners, had not Christ himself publicly entered it in his official character, and solemnly set it apart, to be the home of believers, by the influences of his own atonement. "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us;" and all the heavenly things themselves were purified, consecrated, and set a-part, by his better sacrifice, so as to be accessible and approachable, and heritable by sinners of our world.

SECTION IV.

The Extent of the Atonement illustrated by its Relation to the Universe.

If the atonement of Christ be *limited* in its design and aspect, *particular* in its blessings and influences, and *commercial* in its principles, paying *quid pro quo*, it seems to me impossible to account for the relation, which the scriptures declare to exist, between the atonement and all the works of God. A particular atonement supposes that Jesus Christ suffered the punishment due to the elect, and to them only; and that the blessings of the atonement shall be shared by them and by them only. On this hypothesis the good which angels have received is left entirely unaccounted for, except, perhaps, it be thought a mere sovereign largess: and the good which the wicked enjoy in this world is accounted for, partly as "uncovenanted mercies" scattered among them, and partly as a bonus granted to them for the sake of the church. If God can give some mercies uncovenanted, why not give every mercy? "Uncovenanted," means, irrespective of the promises connected with the atonement. Had the first-born of Adam any of these uncovenanted mercies? Must not Cain have

known that all the good which he enjoyed was connected with the promise of the Seed of the woman? If God could honorably give any mercy without the covenanted atonement, he might give every mercy. The conclusion is unassailable, that if God could give any and every mercy irrespective of atonement, the death of Christ was unnecessary. When it is said that the wicked receive blessings for the sake of the church, the phraseology does not mean that the church is the meritorious cause of those blessings, but it is meant that these blessings are conferred upon others, for the purpose of benefiting the church. The question, "how the ungodly come by these blessings?" is left untouched by such a phrase.

The blessings of the atonement cannot reach where its relations do not extend; and in whatever place, and in whatever world we find the blessings of the atonement, our conclusion is sound, that the designs and the influences of the death of Christ reached there. We discover the blessings of the atonement more or less liberally scattered every where in our world—yea, we find these blessings among principalities and provinces in "heavenly places." The supposition that these blessings reached the heavenly places by accident, or at random, without any design or intent, is unreasonable, and unscriptural. Wherever, in the physical universe, we detect the influences of gravitation, we never suspect that those influences came there by some arbitrariness unaccountable, or by some endowment unintended. We never suspect this, simply, because we have no preconceived physical system to render the suspicion necessary. In discussing the atonement, then, we are not afraid of embracing a favorite maxim of the advocates of limited redemption, that the death of Christ and its benefits are of the same extent. We find these benefits of the death of the Son of God in "all places of his dominions," and we cannot be wrong in believing, that they were intended to be so.

A limited atonement for a certain chosen number of men, leaves the benevolent ministry of angels, in our rebellious world, unaccounted for.

It may account for the angels being ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation; but the whole history of God's works shews, that the ministry of angels has had a benevolent influence upon many who have not proved heirs of salvation. The argument of our Savior about little children supposes that *all of them* have a share in the good services of angels. No one will say, either that the holy angels would give their services to such children, or that such children could become interested in such high advantages, irrespectively of the mediation and atonement of Christ.

This ministry of angels has not been confined to mankind in their childhood; it has followed them when grown up, and even when living in sin. As instances of this benevolent ministry towards mankind as sinners, I might mention the case of Hagar and her son, the case of Balaam, the case of the angel who led the contumacious Israelites through the wilderness; and, not to make a larger enumeration, the case of the angel who descended to the pool of Bethesda* to trouble the waters for the healing of the bodily disorders of men.

The ministry of angels for the benefit of man is in every case an effect of the mediation and atonement of Christ, for angels and principalities are made subject to his authority. They go at his bidding in every employment. If Christ had purchased their ministry for a certain number only, how have these intelligences of distant worlds taken such interests in *all the children* of our world? Is this an uncovenanted employment? and do even they do works of supererogation? Will these holy beings squander upon others a ministry so dearly purchased *only* for some?

* The critical disputes about the text of this narrative do not at all affect the probability of the benevolent aspect of the ministry of angels towards sinners.

An atonement limited in its aspect and design, is opposed to the report which the intelligences of other worlds have given to us of their views of its bearings and influence. This is the report from other worlds. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to *all people:* for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, on *earth* peace, good will towards *men*."

When Peter remarked that angels desire to look into the administration of the atonement, it should be remembered that these intelligences had been inquiring into this subject for above four thousand years. Now let it be considered, that these high and noble existences are possessed of powers remarkable for comprehension and accuracy; that they applied those powers to a given subject for so many ages; that they studied this subject in all the information and light of knowledge in heaven; that their application to this subject did not consist in intellectual speculation merely, but also in actual services employed from time to time for furthering the great arrangements of this subject; and that on their visit to the Shepherds, they were commissioned to give a correct announcement of this provision of mercy.

These intelligences seem to consider this scheme of mercy as embracing the "earth," "men," and "all people." The tidings of the angel are not "good" to all people, unless Christ the Lord be a Savior unto all people. The good tidings that Christ the Lord was a Savior unto all people, could not be "a great joy" unto them, unless he were so, truly and sincerely, the expression of "good-will towards men."

If these well-informed spirits after four thousand years' application of their great minds to this subject, and actual employment in some of its plans, had understood the atonement to be a measure limited to a certain number, they would not have announced it in such

universal terms, and with such an unlimited aspect. When the angel said that the advent of the Savior was a great joy which should be to all people, he understood it to "*be*" so in the purpose of God, and the design of the atonement.

This view of the angel's sentiments on the extent of the provision of mercy, is not at all destroyed by the testimony given to Mary, that she should call her son "Jesus, because he should save *his people* from their sins." It is utterly incapable of proof that the angel meant by "his people," the objects of sovereign speciality and election. "His people" in this passage mean, the people of the Jews, who were, particularly even at this time, the people of his fold: to them he came—but his own [*people*] received him not. This sense of the phrase is fully justified by Luke i, 68, 77; vii, 16. Supposing, however, that the angel intended by "his people" the objects of gracious speciality, this passage would not decide against the universal aspect of the atonement; as in that case it would refer to the actual results only of the atonement, and not at all to its general design and tendency.

Limited views of the atonement are not compatible with the nature of the joy which angels have in the conversion of sinners.

As the conversion of sinners is a pleasure and a joy to them, the inference is fair, that the unconverted state of sinners, is a matter that is displeasing and grievous to them, as much as any thing can be displeasing, and grievous to glorious and happy minds. The argument which the apostle Paul employs with the Corinthians in behalf of purity and propriety in worship, is the supposition that an improper spirit and behavior is displeasing to the angels who commune with their assemblies. The sinner who grieves the Holy Spirit, may be well supposed to grieve holy angels. If however these great and holy intelligences see or know that the atonement of Christ was only designed for a certain number, which, as they become converted, actually supply to Christ the

identical travail of his soul, on what principle can the unconverted state of the others be a grief to them? Their grief cannot arise from the exclusion of these unconverted, from the proposals and offers of the atonement—much less from any impious apprehensions that these offers to sinners were not sincere. It must be left to the advocates of limited atonement to account for this supposed grief of angels upon any other principle, than that of their regarding the sinner as acting a perverse, undutiful, and wicked part, in rejecting the clear and open overtures of the atonement. These angels cannot regard the rejection of the atonement, and of the gospel offers, wrong and wicked in the sinner, if the atonement was never designed for him, and if the offers made to him were not really meant and intended for *his* adoption.

An atonement limited to a certain number is inconsistent with the argument, which is founded on the "desire of angels to look into these things," to press upon sinners the indispensable duty of becoming interested in the salvation of Christ, and the heinous guilt of neglecting it.

Hear Dr. Dwight's statement.* "Were the gospel as untrue as infidels assert, *they* would be no gainers. If it should be true, what will become of *them*. What must be the feelings of an infidel on a dying bed, if he is then in possession of sober thought, and solemnly remembers his contempt for the Savior, and his rejection of the offers of life? With what emotions must he enter eternity?" This argument is sound and sober, and it agrees well with Dr. Dwight's view of the death of Christ.

On the principles of a limited and partial atonement, this argument can not be pressed, on any sinner who may be supposed to be out of the pale of salvation. It is utterly unworthy of the gospel to recommend to such an excluded sinner, the examination of the atonement,

* Dwight's Sermons, vol. ii, p. 440.

as a man of taste, and to tell him that the study of this cardinal measure of the divine government would be a good intellectual exercise for him, and would materially improve the benevolence of his character. Yet the advocates of exclusive salvation can not consistently recommend such a sinner to inquire into the claims of the atonement of Christ in any other way.

A limited atonement is inconsistent with the exhortations and encouragements, which the scriptures give to sinners universally, to direct their attention and pursuit to the happiness and glory of the heavenly places.

Sinners of all sorts are directed and recommended to lay up for themselves treasures in heaven, to seek, and to set their affections upon, the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father. Now all the blessings and the good things in heaven are purified, consecrated, and set apart by the "better sacrifice of Christ." If they are, therefore, purified and selected for a certain number, how can the minister of the gospel invite all men to seek what was never intended for them? There is not a blessing, nor a companion to be had in heavenly places,* that is not hallowed and purified by the blood of atonement. It is,

* I cannot deny myself the pleasure of introducing here a passage from "Bishop Porteus' Sermons;" its pertinency and eloquence will apologize for its length.

"It is, I believe, generally taken for granted, that it was for the human race alone that Christ suffered and died; and we are then asked, with an air of triumph, whether it is conceivable, or in any degree credible, that the eternal Son of God should submit to so much indignity, and so much misery, for the fallen, the wicked, the wretched inhabitants of this small globe of earth, which is as a grain of sand to a mountain; a mere spec in the universe when compared with that immensity of worlds, and system of worlds, which the sagacity of a great modern astronomer has discovered in the boundless regions of space.

"But on what ground is it concluded that the benefits of Christ's death extend no further than to ourselves? As well might we suppose that the sun was placed in the firmament merely to illuminate and warm this earth that we inhabit. To the vulgar and illiterate this actually appears to be the case. But philosophy teaches us better things: it enlarges our contracted views of the divine beneficence, and brings us acquainted with other planets,

therefore, impossible to direct sinners to seek any heavenly favor, but what is under the influence of the atonement. The argument to induce sinners to seek the things above, is that Jesus Christ is there; but this argument would be of no force, if the sinner could not avail himself of Christ's intercession.

and other worlds, which share with us the cheering influence and the vivifying warmth of that glorious luminary. Is it not then a fair analogy to conclude that the great spiritual light of the world, the fountain of life and health, and joy to the soul, does not scatter his blessings over the creation with a more sparing hand? And that the Sun of righteousness rises with healing in its wings to *other orders of beings* beside ourselves? Nor does this conclusion rest on analogy alone. It is evident from scripture itself, that we are by no means the only creatures in the universe, interested in the sacrifice of our Redeemer. Eph. i, 10. Col. i, 16—20.

"From intimations such as these, it is highly probable, that in the great work of redemption, as well as of creation, there is a vast stupendous plan of wisdom, of which we cannot at present so much as conceive the whole compass and extent; and if we could assist and improve the mental, as we can the corporal sight; if we could magnify and bring nearer to us, by the help of instruments, the great component parts of the spiritual, as we do the vast bodies of the material world, there can be no doubt, that the resemblance and analogy would hold between them in this, as it does in many other well-known instances; and that a scene of wonders would burst in upon us from the one, at least equal, if not superior, to those which the united powers of astronomy and optics disclose to us in the other.

"If this train of reasoning be just, (and who is there that will undertake to say, much more to prove, that it is not so?) if the redemption wrought by Christ extends to other worlds, perhaps *many others* besides our own; if its virtues penetrate into heaven itself: if it gather together "ALL THINGS" in Christ, who will then say that the dignity of the Agent was disproportioned to the magnitude of the work? And that it was not a scene sufficiently splendid for the Son of God himself to appear upon, and to display the riches of his love, not only to the race of man, but to many other orders of intelligent beings? Upon the whole, it is certainly unpardonable in such a creature as man, to judge the system of our redemption, from that very small part of it which he now sees, to reason, as if we were the only persons concerned in it; and on that ground to raise cavils, and objections."—Bp. Porteus' Sermons, vol. ii, ser. 3.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATIONS TO DIVINE MORAL GOVERNMENT.

SECTION I.

The Elements of Moral Government.

Divine moral government is that control which the blessed God exercises over the *minds* of accountable beings by *reasoning* with them, that is, by exhibiting motives and inducements addressed to their hopes and fears.

God governs every thing according to its nature. He manages the sea, and regulates the planets by physical force, and the various tribes of animals, by the laws of instinct. Every one knows that the waves of the sea, the revolutions of the planets, and the migrations of birds, are not to be regulated by reasoning with them. But man can be governed and controlled by reasoning with him; and his conduct can be regulated by exhibiting to him sufficient motives and inducement. We keep our oxen to the plough by physical force, but we keep the ploughman at his work by moral government, that is, by giving him sufficient motives and inducements to be so. He is not chained, nor bound, nor yoked, but acts freely.

Physical force can never become an element of moral government. In proportion as force enters it, it ceases to be a moral government. The more freedom there

is in a government, the more purely moral is it. Such a freedom is not the freedom of licentiousness and anarchy, for these encroach always on the freedom and liberty of some of the subjects.

It is by reasoning, and presenting motives, that we govern our own minds, and influence the minds of other men: and it is by the same means that God governs us. If minds become so debased and obstinate as to refuse or to dislike such a control in a community, then coercion will be employed to subdue them. The slaves at the gallies are governed by coercion, and criminals are drawn to the place of execution by force; but this in a just and wise government, only befals those who have voluntarily rejected the control of reason and justice.

Man is a reasonable being, and, as such, is a member of the great moral commonwealth of the universe. That commonwealth supplies him with a law as the rule of his conduct towards the whole universe. This law surrounds him with rich and copious exhibitions of reasons, motives, and allurements, to lead him to the formation of a good character, and to the choice of a wise course of conduct. It forces him to nothing, but leaves him perfectly free. In this government man, as a reasonable being, is free from every thing except from the moral obligation to do good, and from accountableness to his Ruler if he do wrong.

Law must indispensably have the sanctions of rewards and penalties. Without these a law would be a mere advice, a recommendation only, and of no authority. The penalties of the moral law are sufferings and pains. In this inquiry it is no work of ours to account for the reasons *why* sufferings were annexed as penalties to the moral law, any more than it is to discover why injury and destruction are, in the physical laws, the penalties for falling down a precipice, &c. We can only say, that such is the moral constitution of which we are members; and such, do providence, conscience, and the scriptures, declare it to be.

By doing wrong, or sinning, man becomes liable to this penalty. Nothing else but sin will bring us into contact with sufferings as the penalty of the law. No perfection of God, no decree of God, no measure or work of God, no malice of enemies—in short, nothing in the whole universe will bring us within the reach of the punishments of the law, but SIN.

The sufferings of a sinner, of one who transgresses the law, are right and good for the ends of the government of which we are members. The penalty is inflicted, not for the sake of putting the delinquent to pain only, nor of gratifying the private revenge of a ruler, but to secure and to promote the public ends of good government. These ends are to prevent others from transgressing; by giving a decided and clear demonstration of the dignity of the law, and a tangible proof of the evil of crime.

If a member, then, break the rule of the great moral constitution, it is right that he should suffer, that the evil of his sufferings might restrain the evil of transgressing. As far as sufferings answer these public ends, they are right and useful; but when they fall short of these ends, or in severity of infliction go beyond these ends, then, they are only natural evils added to moral ones, without removing them.

It is due to the character of the governor, as the public organ of a commonwealth, and due to the welfare of the government, that the penalty should be executed on the offender. It is right and good that the man who injures you should feel an inconvenience, a pain, a suffering for it,—not to gratify your spleen and revenge, but to prevent others from again daring to injure you. You approve of the penalty when it is executed on others for injuring you; if you disapprove of it, when inflicted upon yourself for injuring others, it is because you are selfish, and feel no concern for the public good.

Sinners have transgressed the law, have wronged God, have spoiled his works, and have injured his liege sub-

jects; therefore, for the public good, they deserve to suffer as transgressors.

SECTION II.

The Penalties of Moral Government administered on the Principle of Public Justice.

Obedience is the first thing which man as a member of government owes to God. If man gives not obedience to the law, then punishment is due from him for the ends of good government. In the classical writers of Greece and Rome, the "*supplicium*" or punishment is always represented as being given or paid by the offender, and as what was due from him to the government. And this language expresses the reality of the case of an offender in moral government. The promotion of the public good by his obedience is due from him: f he do not promote it in this way, then it is due from him to promote it by sustaining the penalty of the law.

The question now occurs, "Upon what principle shall this penalty be administered?" Private individuals will answer this according to their own feelings and interests. Some will say, "let power be employed to inflict a severe chastisement and intense sufferings for the crime." Others will say, "let mercy be exercised to administer the penalty gently and sparingly." Neither of these principles alone will administer the penalty safely and honorably for the ends of government. All honest subjects will say, "let justice administer it, whatever be the consequences." All may assent to this, but the difficulty of administering the penalty is not removed.

Another question occurs, "Upon *what* modification or principle of justice would you execute the penalty?" Justice takes many modifications. There is commutative justice, which gives to another an equivalent for value received. Divine moral government does not ad-

minister the penalty upon this principle, for it is perfectly inconsistent with an administration on moral principles, to deal out a mathematical measurement of punishment for an arithmetical amount of injury and wrong. For though the punishment of the sinner will be no greater than deserved, yet all his sufferings and pains will never be an equivalent, in commercial or commutative justice, for the honors and the homage of which God has been wronged. Commercial or commutative justice cannot be exercised here, for the government is a moral one. No moral quality or action can be recompensed with a commercial payment. It were absurd to suppose a father, a husband, or a master, governing his family on the commercial principle of paying so much, in money or goods, for so much love and obedience.

The execution of the penalty on the principle of distributive justice, is inconsistent with the present administration of moral government, as it is a state of probation and trial. Such an execution would render our present state *not* a state of trial. If every swearer, or sabbath-breaker were immediately dealt with according to his character, men would no longer be in a state of probation, to *try* whether they would swear and keep the sabbath or not. If men would be always seeing the immediate and summary consequences of sin, they would not be proved any longer as to what was in their heart, whether they would keep His commandments or no. They would be walking by *sight*, and not by faith.

The exercise of what is called vindictive justice in the administration of the law, ill accords with the present connection between God and man. There is so much goodness, and mercy, and clemency, and bounty, in our present circumstances, as to assure us that God has thoughts of peace and not of evil concerning us. Even the evils and the inflictions of the present state are not vindictive, but are evidently under the control and direction of a benevolent principle.

If the divine justice be regarded as commutative, or distributive, or vindictive, we must suppose that the execution of the penalty is an affair of indispensable *necessity*, and that it *must* inevitably be inflicted. Besides, in such a necessary execution, there is also implied a necessary and inflexible adherence to the strict letter and form of the law, so that the Public Ruler can not inflict *less* punishment than was threatened, nor confer *more* favor than was promised, without violating the constitution.

Then, we must recur to our former question—"Upon what principle shall this penalty of the law be administered?" I answer, upon the principle of PUBLIC JUSTICE.

PUBLIC JUSTICE is that justice which a government exercises, to preserve the public good, and the public honor of the *whole* community. In human governments the chief magistrate has a power of suspending penalties, and of dispensing favors, provided he does not exercise such a prerogative to the detriment of the public good. Public justice is related to *civil* good, as distributive justice is related to *personal* good. If the penalty be executed, public justice provides that it shall be executed only for the public ends of government, and not for private revenge. If the punishment be suspended, public justice provides that the suspension or remission shall not be detrimental to the public good; it provides that the ends of government shall be as fully secured by the suspension as by the execution. On the principle of distributive justice, Junius Brutus delivered his two offending sons to the lictors, and said, "Execute the law upon them." On the principle of public justice, Zaleucus spared his offending son from blindness, by consenting to suffer the loss of an eye himself. The ends of good government were as effectually secured by the public justice of Zaleucus, as by the distributive justice of Brutus. The tendency in either administration to produce salutary impressions on the subjects, is decidedly in favor of that of public justice.

SECTION III.

The suspension of the Penalty, on honorable grounds, consistent with Public Justice.

If the chief magistrate, in suspending a punishment, or conferring a pardon, act beside the *letter* of the law, yet he cannot be said to be unjust, while his measures subserve the general design of the law, and answer to the *spirit* of the constitution.

Suppose one of a gang of robbers to turn king's evidence. Distributive justice would require that the penalty of death be inflicted upon him as "*particeps criminis*," and the *letter* of the law would demand his execution. In such a case the chief magistrate thinks that he will promote the ends of justice, and secure the public good, *better* by suspending the merited punishment, than by inflicting it; and no honest subject in the kingdom will think him guilty of injustice.

In civil governments, we are every day presented with instances of the suspension of punishment, when it can be done without injury to the public good. A thief is condemned to suffer the punishment of death, but this punishment is suspended, and transportation for life is substituted instead of it. In either case the end of government is answered, namely, that he should no longer wrong honest subjects.

The providential government which God exercises over the affairs of this world, shews that threatenings can be honorably suspended when the ends of good government can be secured by it. The case of Nineveh is in point. The end of divine government, in threatenings denounced by Jonah, was the reformation of the people. This end was secured without an infliction of the penalty; consequently, no one but Jonah has ever thought the suspension or remission of the punishment wrong. That it is a possible case that a punishment may be suspended, when the ends of govern-

ment can be otherwise secured, is evident from the whole history of the forbearance and long-suffering of God. The threatened inflictions are long delayed, many serious warnings are given of the approach of judgments—when judgments come, they are not inflicted so severely as was threatened; and their execution takes place gradually, as if God were reluctant to inflict them, and as if he were waiting every moment for a signal to withhold his hand. This induction proves that to secure the ends of government, is much greater in the estimation of God, than to execute a threatening; and that his denunciations can be honorably withdrawn, when their public ends are secured.

It has pleased God to give us a specimen of his moral government over the universe in the theocracy which he exercised over the Israelites. In the annals of the theocracy, suspensions and remissions of threatened punishments are facts of very frequent occurrence. Indeed the whole of this divine polity was a system of suspensions, founded upon the substitution of sacrifices, as public expedients and honorable grounds for the non-infliction of threatenings and penalties. Since God in this peculiar polity has clearly shewn that he can on honorable grounds suspend a threatened judgment, without being deemed unjust, he has exhibited to us the exercise of a principle, which is capable of indefinite application to the whole sway of his moral government, and which has actually left well-defined and indelible traces of its operation in the administration of divine providence.

Even if the arguments from analogy failed us in proving the justice of suspending a threatening, there is one *fact*, that in the history of sinners is boldly prominent, and is presenting itself at every turn; it is the fact that the original penalty threatened to our first parents has been actually suspended. Had it been literally executed, there would have been no human race now existing. The penalty threatened to Adam was, "in the day thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die." Adam

did eat of the forbidden tree; he was spared, he did not die, his penalty was suspended, his punishment was remitted. Was such a suspension *just?* On what principle can it be justified? It was suspended on the principle of public justice, which made honorable provisions, that the *spirit* of the divine constitution should be preserved without adhering to the *letter* of it.

SECTION IV.

The Death of Christ an honorable ground for remitting Punishment.

I. The atonement of Christ is a distinct and public recognition of the truth and justice of the sinner's liableness to the punishment threatened in the law.

The apostle Paul in Col. ii, 14, represents the influence of the death of Christ as paying a debt or cancelling a bond. The chirograph, or bond, means the power of the law to condemn a sinner, that is, our obligation and liableness to suffer the penalty threatened by the law for sins. The sinner owes to the public government the suffering of the punishment. It is this due, this obligation, this liableness, that is represented by the chirograph.

The first part of an honorable payment of a debt, whether commercial or civil is, freely owning the justice of the claim, and the reality of the obligation. The whole of the undertaking of Christ proceeds upon this recognition, that what the law requires is holy, just, and good. By blotting out the handwriting and cancelling the bond, he did not mean to imply that its claims were false, or that its demands were unjust. On the contrary, he nailed the chirograph to the cross, as having been a true and valid indictment.

The death of Christ, or the atonement by his death, supposes the charge against the sinner to be true, and his liableness to the punishment to be just and right. He came to seek and to save that which is "*lost*,"—to

call, not the righteous, but "*sinners*," "children of wrath," "condemned already." If the atonement did not regard sinners as antecedently bound over by sin to suffer the penalty of the law, Christ would not have died to *redeem* them from under the condemnation of the law. This public testimony to the dueness of the punishment, honors the divine government in maintaining and enforcing its claims on the sinner, and marks sin as an inexcusable wrong, and of unextenuated guilt.

II. The provision of an atonement shews the great concern of the moral Governor for the ends of justice to be secured in his administrations.

God is rich in mercy, plenteous in redemption, and ready to forgive; nevertheless he is concerned for the honor of his justice. He loves right, and he hates wrong. He loves order in his government, and is concerned to prevent disorder. His hatred of disorder and wrong, is commensurate with his love of himself, and with his concern for the public good of the universe. In defending his own rights, the whole of his public character and revealed glory is concerned. He needs no motive to feel compassion and mercy towards sinners, but a safe medium is necessary for the honorable expression of that mercy towards them.

Sin is a public injury to God and to the universe. It is not in the nature of mercy, nor does it become its character, to forgive such a public wrong without an expression of its abhorrence of the crime. Such a mercy would be weak indulgence, a fond and a blind passion. Every one sees that a family governed on such a principle would soon become the pest of a commonwealth. And so would a company of servants or an army of soldiers. Even family discipline requires that when you forgive a child, there ought always to be some expression of displeasure at the offence.

The most powerful expression of mercy's abhorrence of sin, and of its concern for the ends of public justice, has been given in the substitution of the Son of God.

A father, for instance, will not be afraid of relaxing the bonds of good discipline in forgiving a child, when a mother in tears and anguish is the expression of an abhorrence of the child's offence. God has consulted the ends of public justice in the exercise of his mercy, and has set forth the death of his Son as the honorable ground on which he is just in justifying him that believes. God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, as a clear demonstration of his great concern for his justice, and as a public expression at what a dear rate he forgives the sin which his righteous soul abominates.

Such a provision for securing the ends of justice, honors the divine government. It shews that the reins of just authority are not at all relaxed. All the subjects will feel that the moral Governor thinks highly of justice. No friend of the Mediator can slight the law and the government, and no one who slights and disregards the law will ever be deemed a friend of the Mediator.

III. In the atonement the suffering of death by Jesus Christ was substituted, by the blessed God, instead of the suffering of the punishment that was due to the sinner.

Jesus Christ suffered *for* us, the just *for* the unjust. He was made a curse *for* us—and a sin-offering *for* us. When it is said that Christ suffered *for* us, it is not meant that he suffered the sufferings due to us in law, but that *his sufferings were endured as substituted instead of our sufferings.* An atonement goes on the supposition that the identical sufferings threatened against man are suspended, and other sufferings substituted instead of them.

This exchange, or commutation of sufferings, in the expedient for redemption, was intimated in the first promise made to Adam. Man by transgression had become liable to the literal sufferings threatened in the penalty of the law. From these sufferings he was to be delivered by the Seed of the woman. This deliverance was to be effected, not by power, but by a price of sub-

stituted sufferings, designated the "*bruising of the heel,*" a very different kind of suffering from that which was threatened to Adam.

This view of the vicarious and substitutionary character of the sufferings of Christ will give some definiteness and force to the phrase, "Christ has paid our debts." Though this phrase is not scriptural it is not to be treated contemptuously, as it is constantly used with much sweetness and unction by many Christians, and has been sanctified by long usage in our sermons, and in our spiritual songs.

"What are the debts which Jesus Christ has paid for us?" Some answer the question by saying that Jesus Christ obeyed the law for us; gave, in our stead, and in our name, that obedience which we owed to the law, so that the law cannot now demand perfect obedience of us, because this was given to it in our stead by Jesus Christ.

Let it be duly considered—Did Jesus Christ pay our debts in this sense? Did he obey the law that we might not obey it? Did he do what the law required, that we might be discharged from our duty? Did he love God and love his neighbor, in our stead, so that we are delivered from the obligation to do so? I am sure, I wrong my reader by supposing for a moment that he does not perceive, at once, that in this sense, Christ has paid no debts for us. Paying for us the duty which we owed to the law, would be redeeming us *from* God, and not *to* God, and would be an axe at the root of all moral government. No class of rebels would ever be restored to their allegiance by a high officer so obeying the law in their stead, as to discharge them from all fealty and homage.

It is, therefore, evident, that by Jesus Christ's paying our debts, must be meant, not the debt of *duty*, but the debt of *penalty*. The handwriting, or chirograph which he cancelled was not the bond of obligation to duty and service, but the bond of liableness to punishment and sufferings.

It will be inquired, "How did Jesus Christ pay our debt of penalty?" This question is frequently answered, by saying, that Jesus Christ suffered the identical punishment to which we were exposed in law. This sentiment is embodied in a phrase not at all uncommon, that "Jesus Christ suffered the hell of his people."

I shall refer a fuller discussion of the commutation of sufferings to the chapter on the atonement in its connection with sin. I shall, now, only remark farther, that the atonement of Christ cancelled the obligation to punishment, not by paying the *idem* in the duty, nor by suffering the *idem* in the penalty, but by substituting his own sufferings instead of the sufferings due to the sinner.

IV. The sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ answer the same ends as the punishment of the sinner.

An offender is publicly punished by a wise government, not for the sake of putting him personally to pain and torture, but for the sake of deterring others from committing crimes and offences. An English judge once remarked to a criminal before him, "You are condemned to be transported, not because you have stolen these goods, but that goods may not be stolen."

The ends of government in the punishment of offenders are—to shew the goodness and benevolence of the law—to demonstrate the impartial justice of the governor—to exhibit the evil consequences of breaking the law, and to impress offenders with the hopelessness of escaping the punishment due to crime.

You may be doubting the benevolence of a law that takes away a man's life. But suppose your house robbed, or your child murdered, you would account that law really benevolent that would kindly throw around you the shield of her sympathy, and would rid the country of such robbers and murderers. It is true, that the murderers themselves would not regard such a law as good and benevolent, but every honest man would admire and welcome it. Sinners generally judge of the laws of God, as criminals judge of the laws of their country. Public punishments tend to shew that the law

is good and that it watches kindly over the interests of the poorest subject.

By public punishment the magistrate shews that his justice is impartial and fair. He is above private motives; his concern is for the public good. The insulted rights of the lowest subject shall be vindicated by him: and the rank or power of an illustrious offender shall not thwart the measures of righteousness. The effect will be, that all will stand in awe of the majesty of unsullied justice.

The spectators of a public punishment are likely to be impressed with the evil of the crime. They perceive that they who know the interest of the nation best, regard the deed of the culprit as injurious and wrong. They feel that if every one did as the culprit did, there would be no living in any community. They will know that by the conduct of the culprit some families have suffered severely, and that, if he had been spared, many more would have suffered. They would see that such a mode of life, however easy and pleasant for the moment, is sure, eventually, to end in sorrow, infamy, and ruin; and that such an ignominious end of such a character, will be approved and praised by all honest men every where.

The other end of government, in executing punishment, is to convince all offenders, of the hopelessness of escaping the law. The criminal may long hide himself, but eventually he will be apprehended, and caught in the firm grasp of the law. Neither his obscurity nor his rank, neither his entreaties nor his bribes, can shelter him from the execration of the law and the constitution. The impressions of this, every spectator, and every hearer of the execution, will carry with him to his home, and to his retirement.

If a man transgress a law, he must, in a just and firm government be punished. Why? Lest others have a bad opinion of the law, and transgress it too. But suppose that this end of the law can be secured without punishing the transgressor; suppose that a measure shall

be devised by the governor, which shall save the criminal, and yet keep men from having a bad opinion of the law. Why, in such a case, all would approve of it both on the score of justice, and on the score of benevolence. For public justice only requires that men should be kept from having such a bad opinion of the law, as to break it. If this can be done without inflicting what, in distributive justice, is due to the criminal, public justice is satisfied, because its ends are fully answered.

In the moral government of God, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ does this. It secures all the ends of the law, as if the sinner himself had been punished. This view of the atonement is, I think, what Paul meant when he said, that "Christ was the end of the law for righteousness;" that is, that the very end which would have been secured by the punishment of the sinner himself, has been amply and fully secured by the death of Christ. It is on this account that the death of Christ is represented in scripture as an atonement, a satisfaction, or an equivalent, for suspending the literal execution of the penalty on the transgressor.

There are two sorts of equivalents, one belonging to commercial transactions, and the other to moral and civil affairs. A commercial equivalent is an exchange of one kind of property for another, as between a buyer and seller, and which particularly defines the kind and the quantity to be thus exchanged. A moral or civil equivalent does not regard kind or quantity, but secures the same ends, and produces the same effects, as the other moral or civil measure instead of which it is substituted. Why in the social circle do you accept of an expression of sorrow for a fault, instead of inflicting the pain of your displeasure? It is because you think such sorrow will answer the same ends as the infliction of your displeasure. Why was the death of Zimri and Cozbi, by the zeal of Phinehas, accepted by God as an atonement, instead of inflicting the threatened death on all the Israelites who had joined Baalpeor? It was because it answered the same ends for preventing idol-

atry, as if all the idolaters had died. Why were the sufferings of Jesus on the cross substituted, instead of inflicting the curse of the law on man? It was because that, in the estimation of the moral Governor of the universe, these sufferings of his Son would answer the same "end of the law," as would have been secured by the destruction of the transgressors themselves.

The death of Christ secures this end. It magnifies the law, and makes it honorable in the sight of the universe, as holy, just, and good, both in its commands and in its threatenings. It is a demonstration of God's justice, as it shews that he would not exercise even his mercy, without an expedient to honor his justice, though at the cost of the sufferings of his illustrious Son. It is a testimony to the evil of sin—that it is regarded by God as an evil, that it has actually inflicted evils on many, and is likely to inflict more; that it tends to misery, infamy, and death. It demonstrates the impossibility of escaping the law; for if God spared not his own Son as the substitute, "how can we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Thus the death of Christ tends to deter men from breaking the law, and answers the ends of punishment.

The sufferings of Christ not only secure the same ends of government as the death of the sinner, but they answer them more fully and abundantly. They better express the benevolence of the character of God; they better shew the evil of sin; they supply better motives for holiness; and they bring a greater accession of happiness to the universe, for they not only prevent miseries that might have come, but they suspend those which were really due. The sufferings of a Personage of such grandeur and worth, are calculated to make on the universe deeper impressions of the rectitude of God's government, and of God's displeasure against sin, than a literal infliction of the penalty on sinful and degraded creatures. Yea, they answer other and higher ends than the prevention of sin. The sufferings of millions of sinners could never have been made a ground and

medium for exercising mercy; could never bring any sinner that was under the penalty into repentance; and never could save other sinners. The sufferings of Christ can do *these* things, and do them gloriously. Thus did the blood of Christ speak BETTER things than the blood of Abel.

There are two stupendous facts in the administration of moral government which prove that the death of Christ answers all these ends. The first is, that though God declares sin to be an infinite wrong to him, yet he never asks any sinner to make an atonement for his sin. The reason of this is, that he has set forth his own Son as the propitiation for this. The second is, that God will not treat any man as a sinner, if he will believe that the death of his Son was a propitiation for sin. The reason is, that in Christ he is reconciling the world unto himself without imputing their transgressions unto them.

V. The death of Christ provides that pardon shall be dispensed to the offenders in such a manner, as shall fully sustain the interests of moral government.

Pardon is proclaimed through an atonement which by its very provision supposes that the honor and authority of the law, are not weakened. If God had had no regard for the honor of his law and government, he would not have provided an equivalent. He was just, independently of the atonement, but he provided an atonement that he might *be* just in *justifying* sinful men.

The sinner is forgiven on his repentance, which reflects a disgrace and reproach upon sin. God, indeed, has always the disposition and the power to forgive, independently of the state and feelings of the sinner, but the sinner's discharge from his liableness to the penalty of the law is not passed, as a judicial act, until he repents of his transgression. As God has given an expression of his abhorrence of sin in *proclaiming* pardon, so has he ordained, for the ends of government, that the sinner also should give an expression of his abhorrence of it. This the sinner does by his repentance. When one comes forth from the ranks of the revolters, and re-

turns to his allegiance, it is as far as his influence and example go, a reflection both on the revolt, and on the revolters. A repenting sinner blames both himself and others for rebellion against God, and thus promotes the interest of the divine government.

Forgiveness is offered freely and sincerely to *all* the offenders, which preserves the divine government from the charge either of capricious partiality, or of arbitrary severity. God calls upon all men every where to repent, and this is an intimation to all men every where, that there is for them forgiveness with God. He exhibits his pardons as in every way suitable and adequate to the case of the greatest offender, for he is plenteous in mercy and able to save to the uttermost. He publicly promises free pardon to every penitent sinner, and sincerely offers it to every sinner, with a solemn declaration, that "him that cometh he will in no wise cast out." Hence no offender can despise the government for partiality, or blame it for undeserved severity.

The pardon of the gospel comes from sovereign grace and unmerited favor, and this excludes all boasting, claim, and presumption. Notwithstanding the reconcileableness of God, and notwithstanding the atonement of Christ, yet no sinner can claim pardon. Some persons, indeed, have represented pardon as due from God to the elect; and have said, that it would be unjust in God not to pardon them. There is nothing in the holy scriptures, there is nothing in the nature of grace itself, to support such a bold and impious sentiment. Try it yourself. Did you ever feel in prayer that you could *claim* the blessings you asked? Does a happy soul feel so on his entrance to heaven? Does Gabriel feel that he has a claim even to his own crown? No: it is all of sovereign grace. The offender accepts the pardon by *believing* it, that is, by faith. The whole of this arrangement excludes presumption and self-gratulation. The reprieve is not the prisoner's own, until he accept it; he accepts it merely by *believing* it. Would any prisoner think that he deserved the reprieve because

he believed it? Would *he* demand his pardon as a claimant, or would he beg it as a suppliant? Would he presume on the king's favor and live in rebellion? No, the king has freely, of his own prerogative forgiven him, but it is in a way, "that he might be feared" and served.

The dispensation of pardon still perpetuates and continues man in a state of probation, and this checks all inclinations to licentiousness. God pardons, not that he might be trifled with, but that he might be *feared*. Man when pardoned is not taken out of a state of probation and trial. He is still accountable to law, he is still liable to break that law, he is taught to pray daily for pardon, he is chastened and afflicted for his sin, and he will have to appear at the reckoning of the judgment day. By such an arrangement the honors of the divine government are safe.

The exhibition of pardon has in itself a tendency to affect the heart, and to restore a rebel to his allegiance. There is forgiveness with God, not that he might be dreaded, but that he might be esteemed, revered, and served. There is no tendency in the dispensation of wrath to make the sinner relent and return; it hardens more and more. Sinners who have been beaten with many stripes become harder and harder. Satan, Cain, and Judas, are now harder, than when the storm began to fall on them. It is mercy that conquers the heart, and wins the rebel from his revolt. It is mercy that restores man to his allegiance, that God may be served. Wherever this is prominent in the ministry of the gospel, thither do guilty criminals flock, as doves to their windows. After all, it is not mercy to *rebellion*, but mercy to *rebels*; therefore, there is nothing in forgiveness to connive at revolt, though it smile on the sinner.

SECTION V.

A limited Atonement inconsistent with the principles of Moral Government.

By a limited atonement, I understand, an atonement that consists in suffering the limited amount of punishment due in law to a certain number of offenders, the benefits of which are limited to that number, and to that number only. Such an atonement is at variance with the declared principles of divine moral government. It is at variance with the accountableness of sinners to the law, in their present state of probation; and it is inconsistent with the principles of justice on which the divine government is administered.

A limited atonement is established on the principle that the penalty threatened by the law must, of indispensable necessity, be executed, executed literally and fully, or otherwise the justice of the divine government would be weakened and dishonored. It supposes further, that if the punishment of the law be not executed on the offender, it must be executed on the substitute. Then it proceeds to argue,—some offenders are through grace delivered from the punishment, therefore their punishment must have been inflicted on their substitute. And again,—some sinners will forever suffer the punishment of the law in hell, but it would be unjust to inflict the punishment again upon them, if Christ, as a substitute, endured it for them; and therefore the punishment of these sinners was never sustained by Jesus Christ in his atonement.

Sometimes the necessity of the sufferings of Christ as an atonement, is made to arise from the inexorableness of vindictive justice; and then, vindictive justice is represented as impossible to be satisfied and appeased, except by the awful intensity of the sufferings of the Mediator. Nothing less would propitiate it. Our ears and our hearts have been pained a thousand times, by

representations of the blessed God as if revelling in the agonies of the cross, and in the blood of his own Son. When "it pleased the Lord to bruise him," it was not for the undivine gratification of inflicting pangs and tortures of intense pain; but "it pleased the Lord" to deliver him up a sacrifice for our offences, to substitute his sufferings instead of ours, an expedient for honoring the law and saving man. God still held his Son in undiminished love, and had infinite pleasure in his vicarious undertaking, and had, in all the mysterious sufferings of the cross, sincere good-will towards the salvation of man. If we suppose the compensative scheme of atonement to consist not in a substitution of person only, but also in a substitution of sufferings, the atonement ceases to be a satisfaction to vindictive justice, but it will appear to be what it really is, an atonement to satisfy the ends of public justice.

Upon the principle of distributive justice, it is impossible to account for the atonement of Christ and for the salvation of man. Some divines constantly affirm, that divine justice *required* the death of Jesus Christ as a substitute, and that the death of Christ satisfied divine justice.

Is this, indeed, *true*? To ascertain this, think, What is justice? Justice is giving to every one his due, or treating every one according to his character. Now, let us ponder it; "Was this justice satisfied in the death of Christ?" Justice is satisfied when it gives to every one his due, or treats every one according to his character. But, were the sufferings of an ignominious death really DUE to Christ? Did he DESERVE the treatment which he received? Is the salvation which sinners receive through his death really DUE to them? In short, is either Christ, or the sinner, treated in this transaction according to character?

I conceive that any man looking at this stupendous scheme, not through the colored medium of a theological system, will see that Christ received sufferings which he never deserved, and that the sinner receives

blessings which were never due to his character. Divine justice treats neither party according to character: "the *Just*" who "did this," and deserved to "live," *dies;* and "the soul that sinned," and deserved to die, *lives;* both cases being contrary to the principle of distributive justice.

The remark is probably ready, that, "this is a *peculiar* exercise of justice, as 'the just' is substituted for 'the unjust,' that the unjust might be saved for his sake." Very well. Such a measure will be deemed and admired by all as an expedient of transcendent benevolence and clemency: but the original question still presses on us; "How is *justice* satisfied in it, when neither party has what is due to his character?" In this critical difficulty, reason and revelation meet us with the assurance, that though this expedient of substitution is not distributive justice, either to Christ or to the sinner, yet it is a measure of entire justice towards the interests of the community under divine moral government, because the ends of justice are as fully secured by the substitution, as if the offender himself had suffered. It is therefore evident that the justice which admitted of substitution is not what is called distributive justice. It is public justice.

The exercise of public justice is suitable to the relations existing between God and man, because it is free, benevolent, and honorable. Public justice is voluntary and optional. The standing order of the divine government is not that God *must* be just in executing punishment, but that he *might* be just in shewing clemency. It makes the infliction of the penalty not indispensable, but *admissible*, and it makes the suspension of the penalty *admissible too*, if the ends of its infliction can be otherwise honorably secured.

It is benevolent. It shews that God is on the side of good; that he has good-will to each subject, and to all his empire. "*Therefore* will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious; and *therefore* will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; FOR the Lord is a *God*

of judgment." Public justice is honorable. By its exercise God humbles himself without being dishonored: and man is condemned without being injured, and he is saved without reproach. God himself regards its exercise for a pleasure, a joy, and a glory. It is as a just God and a Savior, that he rests in his love, and joys over the universe with singing.

The hypothesis of a limited atonement is founded upon commercial views of the justice of God. It supposes that justice was administered to Christ as a substitute, upon commutative principles. The hypothesis stands thus: A certain number of souls was given to Christ to be saved—a certain amount of punishment was due to them for so many sins—Christ suffered that amount for them, and for them only; the benefits resulting from that suffering is limited to them, and to them only.

The supposition of God acting on the principle of commutative or commercial justice, taking and receiving a *quid pro quo*, completely perverts and destroys the moral dignity of the atonement, and its influence as a medium of saving man with honor to the divine government. It makes God to exact punctually from Christ the identical punishment threatened to the sinner, as none other could have been due, to be inflicted. It makes God to proportion the sufferings of his Son to the number of sins imputed to him, as it would have been unjust to have inflicted more or less than the proportion really due. It represents the Father of mercies as doling out favors in proportion to the number and degree of his Son's sufferings, giving neither more nor less to any man than the purchased quantum. It represents the elect as claiming salvation as what is justly due to them from God, for value which he has received from their substitute, as it would be unjust to exact the same debt twice. It represents the salvation of some men as utterly impossible, because their debt has never been paid. It exhibits the great and blessed God as mercenary in his gifts, unwilling to yield a single boon

but for value received in the sufferings of his Son—sufferings which are represented as *inducing* (not to say *bribing*) Him to be propitious and merciful All these limitations of the atonement are to be traced to commercial views of divine justice; and surely, such troubled and unwholesome streams should make us seriously doubt the purity of their source.

I will now introduce a few citations from two of our most masterly divines, partly to supply specimens of what I mean by commercial views of the divine administrations; partly to shew that such commercial views naturally produce the doctrine of limited atonement; and partly to indicate how much these commercial views have colored a great portion of systematic theology. The number of citations of this character, either from these two authors themselves, or from other theological writers might be indefinitely increased—but these are sufficient.

The first author is Dr. Thomas Goodwin, a great master in the Israel of his day, whose works are marked by deep research, independent thinking, and evangelical suavity. The extracts will be from his "Discourse of Christ the Mediator," found in the third volume of his works in folio. ed. 1692. In b. i. chap. 5, Dr. Goodwin introduces the sinner as proposing to God for his pardon, "rivers of oil, the first-born of his body, &c." but all being too low, the Doctor remarks, "There is no proportion. God would never have *turned away so fair a chapman*, if his justice could afford *so cheap* a commutation." In b. i. chap. 7, he says of Christ, "He must pay God in the same *coin* we should, and therefore, must make his soul an offering for sin—and if he be made sin, he must be made a curse; and which is more than all this, *God himself must be the Executioner*, and his own Son the person who suffers, as *no creature* could *stroke hard enough to make it satisfactory.*" In b. i. chap. 8, he says, "As his Father recommended the business to him [Christ] so also he gave special recommendation of the persons for whom he

would have all this done"—viz., those who were given to Christ. Then he observes—"a strange *gift* it was, which he must yet *pay* for, and must *cost* more than they were *worth;* and yet he takes them as a gift and favor from his Father." "So as Mediator (and though a Mediator) he saves NOT A MAN, but whom his Father gave him, nor puts a *name in* more than was in *his Father's* BILL. You may observe how careful he was in his *account*, and how punctual in it. John xvii. 12. He is exact in his account as appears, in that he gives a reason for him that was lost, that he was a son of perdition, and so *excuseth* it." In b. i. chap. 9, he represents Isa. xlix, as "the draught of the covenant, or deed of gift betwixt Christ and his Father for us"—and then says, "His Father offers (as it were) *low at first*, and mentioneth but Israel only as his portion. Then as he [Christ] is thinking them too small an inheritance, *too small a purchase for such a price*."—"God therefore answers him again, and enlargeth and stretcheth his covenant further with him." In the next chapter he says, that "Christ laid down a price *worth* all the grace and glory we shall have."

The next author is Dr. JOHN OWEN, the Lebanon of English theology. The great extent of his learning, his accurate sagacity in searching the workings of the heart, and the prominence which he has given to the person of Christ, have recommended his works to such acceptance and circulation, as to give their own hue and character to much of the theology of his country. But the principle of a commercial atonement, of paying *quid pro quo*, is interwoven with his whole system of divinity, as Phidias's name in the shield. Take a specimen, or two, from his 'Death of Death,' &c.* "God spared not his own Son, but gave him up to death for us all—that he made him to be sin for us—that *he put all the sins of all the elect into that cup* which he was to drink of; that the wrath and flood which they feared

* OWEN'S 'Death of Death,' b. iii, chap. 9, or WORKS, vol. v. p. 384, 385. See also p. 339, 340.

did fall upon Jesus Christ"—"so all the wrath that should have fallen upon them, fell on Christ, &c."—He *charged* upon him, and *imputed* to him *all the sins* of *all the elect*, and proceeded against him *accordingly*. He stood as our surety, *really charged* with the *whole debt*, and was to *pay* the *utmost farthing*." "The Lord Christ (if I may so say) was *sued* by his Father's justice unto an execution, in answer whereunto he underwent all that was due to sin, &c."—"Christ underwent not only that wrath (taking it passively) which the elect were [actually] under, but *that* also *which they should have undergone*, had not he borne *it* for them."

I have quoted enough. An atonement of such a commercial character is made to appear a measure of niggard calculation, and dribbling mercenariness. It will be a glorious day for the doctrines of the gospel, and for practical godliness, when commercial views of the death of Christ shall be rejected both by Christian divines and Christian churches.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

SECTION I.

All Providence centering in the Atonement.

I have already considered the atonement in its relation to all works of God, considered as the productions of his wisdom, power, and goodness, and as the abodes of intelligent beings, and theatres of divine dispensations. In that chapter, no immediate regard was had to the administrations of providence in this world. In order, therefore, to a due examination of the atonement in all its bearings and influence, we shall now proceed to consider it in its relation to the providence which God exercises over our world.

Providence is that wise oversight and holy care which the blessed God exercises over all beings, so as to preserve, direct, and order, all their agencies, for the good of his whole empire, and for the display of his own glory. It is the divine disposal and administration of all the works, and of all the events of time. Time is always shifting its scenes, and, in every change, is producing fresh characters, and successive works. Every moment of time is thronged with agents, and crowded with events. All things, and all beings are at work, and are at work for God, under his cognizance, management, and control. All are working out some amazing plan, of which the operations of every individual is an underplot, and of which, the progress and the upshot shall be according to the wisdom of God, and the good pleasure of his will.

The foundation of providence is the existence of God. If there be no God, there can be no providence. Providence without the oversight of infinite intelligence is a fortuitous concourse of events, a series of plots without a meaning. Heathen historians, both ancient and modern, would be puzzled to answer the questions.—What can be the *meaning* of their histories? For what purposes have all these events come to pass? What is to be the final upshot of all the movements and changes in dynasties and empires? History without a providence is an idle tale, a cypher without an integer, a number of unconnected links, but no chain. Divine providence, on the contrary, gives unity, worth, energy, and weight to all the events of history, by connecting each and all with the infinite superintending mind of God.

As heathen philosophers rob history of its importance and glory, by separating it from the providence of God; so, many Christian divines rob providence of much of its beauty and worth by severing it from the mediation and the atonement of Christ.

It has long been the fashion in theology to consider the divine government, as consisting of three kingdoms or provinces, called the kingdom of nature, the kingdom of providence, and the kingdom of grace. The same fashion has represented the kingdom of grace alone, as connected with the atonement of Jesus Christ; supposing the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of providence to sustain no relationship to his mediation. I believe such distributions of the divine empire to be human, unscriptural, and, therefore, untenable. The advancement of natural philosophy has banished from the science of chemistry the old orthodox principles of "the four elements," and it is now full time that the progress of scriptural theology should have abolished the human arrangements of the three divine kingdoms. If, however, these arrangements only mean that nature, providence, and grace are *imperia in imperio*—wheels within a wheel,—works and events of various diameters

thrown around one Centre, and that centre, the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, such distribution and such language would be admissible. It is making either of these provinces independent of the central throne, that makes such a division inadmissible and blameable.

To separate nature and providence from the mediation of Christ, is to put asunder what God has united. What is nature but the original constitution of all things? What is the original constitution of all things, but the state in which they were created *by* Christ, and *for* Christ? And this is mediation. What is providence? Is it not Christ upholding all things, and governing all things? Is it not all things consisting and holding together in Christ? Providence, then, alienated from the mediatorial administration of Christ, is not the providence of the scripture. And nature separated from the work of Christ is not the "course of nature," mentioned in the scripture as a theatre for the scenes of redemption; and as an apparatus of means for the good of them that love God.

Nature, providence, and grace, then, are three immense wheels in one machinery,—the cogs, and revolutions of each, catching and influencing those of the others, and all put in motion by the blood of the great atonement. God does not one thing as the God of nature, another thing as the God of providence, and a third as the God of grace. Such language is just as proper as that he does one thing as the God of vegetation, another as the God of geology, and a third as the God of astronomy; or one thing as the God of the earth, another as the God of the moon, and another thing as the God of the sun. He is of one mind, and his system is one. Any one of his dispensations, like a stone thrown into a lake, produces, according to its weight and importance, circles which tell on other portions of his works, and in other places of his dominion.

The atonement of Christ is an event to which all providence refers. "The hour" of atonement was the hour for which all hours were made. It was the hour

to which all preceding providences looked forward, and to which all subsequent providences look backward. It was in the fulness of time, at a crisis which providence had matured, that Christ offered the atonement of his death. In this atonement, as the centre of power and influence, Christ stands, amid the numerous revolutions of providence, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

SECTION II.

The mediatorial administration of Providence founded on the Atonement.

The sacred scriptures regard the atonement of Christ as the ground and reason for committing the administrations of providence into his hands.

Let us hear what Jesus Christ himself says, "All power is given to me in heaven and earth." Mat. xxviii. 19. In this passage Christ regards himself as the President of the entire universe. He declares his power to be universal. He has authority over heaven, to employ all its intelligences in his service, and to dispose of all its happiness and honors according to his sovereign will and pleasure. His authority extends over all the earth, over all beings and things, over all times, works, and events,—and especially over the probation and the destinies of man. This language does more than merely assert the universal domination of the Redeemer, it gives also an intimation of the harmonious administration of this immense power. The power exercised in heaven is not opposed to the interests of the earth; and the authority employed on earth is subservient to the great interests of heaven. It is by the influence of the atonement that the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

The whole language of the New Testament is an echo of this regal proclamation of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Mediator is "King of kings, and Lord of

lords." He is "Lord of all." "He has power over all flesh." He has "the keys of Hades and the grave," and is "Lord both of the dead and the living." He is the "head of all principality and power," "the Lord of glory." "Every judgment is committed unto him." Indeed, "all things are delivered unto him of the Father, who has constituted him the heir of all things, who has put all things under his feet, and who has issued a public edict from his throne, "that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things in earth, and things under the earth."

Another class of passages distinctly asserts that the person of the Mediator is invested with this authority and dominion on account, and in consequence of his atonement. Take Phil. ii, 8—10 as a nucleus for the others. "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. WHEREFORE God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name—that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD to the glory of God the Father." To possess this universal empire was one design of his sacrifice. "For, for this end Christ died that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living." It was after that he offered one sacrifice for sins, that he for ever sat down at the right hand of God. The apostle Peter represents Christ as "gone into heaven, and on the right hand of God; angels, authorities, and powers, being made subject unto him." 1 Peter iii, 22. He entered heaven in his priestly office, and in his atoning character, as the high priest entered the holy of holies; and on this official entrance into heaven, he took public possession of all power and authority.

It was not now that the *grant* of universal dominion was made to him; nor was it now that he commenced his mediatorial government; but it was now that he was publicly inaugurated into the administration of divine providence. Though in virtue of the original and eternal grant of the Father, Christ had been in the actual

possession of all power, yet it was not till after his ascension in his atoning office, that he assumed the *public exercise* of his mediatorial authority over providence. Probably the new aspect which the administration of providence assumed about this time towards the Gentiles was designed to be a proof of this, as it seemed reserved to honor the coronation, and to adorn the triumphs of the Mediator. And the copious effusion of gracious influences at this time seemed to give a new character to the dispensations of providence, as royal largesses scattered among the people to grace the auspicious entrance of Christ upon the *public exercise* of his mediatorial power, as the official organ of moral government.

Without an atonement there would have been no providence exercised among mankind. If there be no relationship between the atonement of Christ and the providence of God, it is impossible to account for the continuation of mankind on the face of the earth.

Suppose for a moment that the arrangements of the constitution with Adam in Eden had been carried out into literal execution. In the day that our first parents would eat of the forbidden fruit, "dying they were to die." They *did* eat. And had this constitution been executed to the letter, they would immediately have died and perished; and, consequently, would have had no posterity. If the threatening had been executed literally, there would have been *no human race*. They, however, sinned, and became liable to the literal infliction of the threatened punishment, but the infliction of the literal penalty was suspended, and they lived. How did this come to pass? It was by the introduction of a new dispensation, a dispensation that was sparing, restorative, and saving. The ground of this new dispensation was the Seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head, and obtaining, by his sufferings and conflicts, a mastery over the world, and over all evils.

From the moment that the threatened penalty was suspended by the introduction of another constitution,

Adam and Eve lived under a new dispensation, and under this new dispensation Cain and Abel were born; yea, under this new dispensation the whole posterity of Adam has been introduced into the world. This has been long and strenuously disputed, but on no solid and scriptural grounds. I would just ask, if the penal sanctions of Eden had been literally inflicted on our first parents, how was it *possible* for them to have a race of offsprings? If the human race is born under the Eden constitution, or as it is called, the covenant of works, where is the Eden *test* of probation? on whom has its literal threatenings ever been executed? who has ever died in the day that he first sinned?

The case of mankind, I conceive, stands thus. In the wise and harmonious exercise of divine prerogative and public justice, the original penalty or curse threatened against Adam was suspended. I do not consider the *sentence* pronounced on our first parents after the fall, to be the same with the *curse* that was threatened to them before their fall. The *sentence* is daily executed, but the original curse or penalty threatened was suspended. It was suspended, on the ground of the atonement of Christ as an equivalent, that is, as an expedient that was substituted instead of it, and that would answer the same public ends as it. By such a substitution another dispensation was introduced, and by the introduction of another dispensation, our first parents and their posterity were allowed to live.

The human race, then, owes its very existence, with all the blessings and advantages of that existence to the mediation and the atonement of Jesus Christ. For without a regard to the atonement, it is impossible to view the suspension of a punishment which had been solemnly threatened, to be either honorable or safe to the divine government. If God can with honor to his government remit any punishment irrespective of the atonement, he might remit all—which would make the atonement of Christ altogether vain.

If the dispensations of providence be separated from the influence of the atonement, no principle remains to account for the harmonious administration of judgment and mercy in the government of the world.

Take away the atonement of Christ, and the state, and the circumstances, and the prospects of man, present a labyrinth for which we have no clue. If man be what he was first made, and what he ought to be, in the service and in the favor of his Maker and Owner, how will you account for his misery and degradation? If man be abhorred, and spurned, and cursed of his Maker and lawgiver, how will you account for his mercies, for his probation, for the call on him to repentance, and for the numerous answers which God has given to his prayers?

Man is evidently under a mixed administration. He himself is regarded in the mixed character of a condemned sinner, and a probationary candidate. God governs him in the mixed character of a sovereign Lord, and just Judge. Scripture and observation prove that these things are really so. The difficulty is to find some ground or medium in which prerogative and law, or mercy and judgment, shall harmonize. Such a medium is the atonement of the death of Christ.

This medium is not necessary to the *existence* of mercy and justice in God, nor, perhaps, to a *separate* exercise of them. God has these attributes and perfections irrespectively of the mediatorial constitution, and they harmonize in his nature with perfect loveliness, for in him can be no clashing attributes or contradictory principles. A medium is necessary only to harmonize their *exercise* in a mixed administration of moral government.

The atonement of the death of Christ is a suitable medium for this. It supposes man to be a sinner, and yet a candidate in probation. It supposes God to be a sovereign Benefactor, and yet a righteous Governor. It exhibits God in the fulness of his character, a righteous Legislator who published a good law; a gracious Lord

who exercises his sovereign prerogative in infinite wisdom; and a just Governor, who, in dispensing pardon and favor, consults the dignity and the honor of his government. The very provision of an atoning expedient supposes all this. The atonement does not exhibit one attribute glorious and lovely at the expense of the other, but it shews forth each and all in unsullied purity, in well adjusted harmony, and in greater lustre and splendor than any measure in the universe. It enables God honorably to condescend to shew favors without sinking his character or his government.

The same atonement in its aspect upon the sinner, contemplates him in his mixed character, under condemnation, and yet in probation. The provision of an atonement tells the sinner, that the moral legislator thought the quarrel between him and the offender, of such an importance, as to call in the interposition of a third party, and that third party a person of great dignity and worth. It tells him that the very friend who interposed for him regards the law which the sinner violated as holy, just, and good. By exhibiting the sufferings of this illustrious Interposer, as substituted instead of the punishment due to the offender, the atonement brings a greater amount of motive, to deter sinners from transgression, than the tempter can bring to allure to it. God is so well pleased with the atonement of his Son, that he reckons any of his perfections honored and glorified by being exercised for the sake of it, and on account of it. He is willing to confer any boon and any favor, however great, to any offender, however unworthy, if he will ask it in the name and for the sake of his dear Son.

In this mixed administration of the divine government, man's transgression will account for his miseries, God's goodness will account for his mercies, and the atonement of Christ will account for the honorable exhibition of favor to him as a condemned offender.

SECTION III.

The administration of Providence subservient to the ends of the Atonement.

If all the movements in the physical universe are put in subserviency to gravitation, it is valid to argue that gravitation is connected with all the arrangements of matter. By a similar train of reasoning we can prove a connection between the atonement of Christ and all the arrangements of providence. The fact of such a connection is established both by the testimony of the scriptures, and by the whole aspect of the dispensations of providence.

1. The whole design and aspect of the atonement, is "good will to men;" and to this, the whole administration of providence is subservient.

The entire character and history of providence are summed up in one inspired sentence: "all things work together for good." "All things" in the universe are at "work." All things are at work "together," in order and harmony. The product of the harmonious co-operation of all things is "good." This aggregate of good produced in the universe, forms the portion and inheritance of "them who love God." The workings together of good agents produce an immense accumulation of good; and even the workings of bad agents are over-ruled for good. Indeed all the evils in the universe arise from agents *not* working their proper work; but even this is made subservient to the production of good upon the whole.

It is a fact which should form the doctrinal creed of every man, that in the whole machinery of providence, there is not a single wheel made and intended to produce evil. Every wheel, and every revolution of every wheel, is intended, placed, and fitted to produce good, and to produce nothing but good. It is true, indeed,

that the results of providential revolutions may and will be for evil to some; nevertheless, the reason of this is not in the movements of providence, but in the character and attitude of sinners themselves. The workings of any piece of machinery may be good and productive of good, but if a drunken or a heedless man throw himself within its cogs, the fault of the result cannot be ascribed to the working of the machinery. Picture to yourself a thief at his wicked work, skulking in darkness, and grasping his booty. Will he remain long on the scene of wrong to enjoy his prey? No. See how all the stars of heaven move in their courses—see, how the great globe itself rolls in rapid and mighty movement—see, how the sun travels in the greatness of his strength. All these stupendous movements are positively good, and produce good. They are for evil to the spoiler; simply because he is a spoiler, and at a wrong work; they are for good to every honest man, who is at his proper work. Every friend of sin is like a besotted man entangled in the meshes of a good machinery, whose revolutions will eventually crush and destroy him. He is out of his place. The author of the machinery never *intended* him to be there, and therefore the blame of the evil consequences is not to be ascribed to him. An evil doer is like a thief and a robber, whose pursuits are not in harmony with the "course of nature," and therefore the course of nature, and the revolutions of providence are against *him*.

History and experience testify that in the present mixed administrations of providence, mercy, and judgment, like ingredients in a medicine, or like a thunderstorm in the atmosphere, operate for the public good, and altogether wear an aspect of benevolence and kindness towards man. Judgments are never sent without warnings, which are like the voice of mercy crying before the trumpet of judgment. Judgments keep up a constant memorial of the rectitude of the governor, and a testimony to his concern for the public welfare in

shewing that he is as much determined to defend good laws, as he was disposed to make them. These judicial interpositions restrain men from great evils, and really prove blessings to many families, and to many neighborhoods by removing a root of bitterness, and an evil example from among them. Even the severest infliction of judgments leave more criminals behind than they sweep away, that the others may have a season for repentance. Judgments come very gradually, and when they do come, God never stirs up all his wrath, and he never afflicts with the "greatness of his power." If even the judgments executed in the administrations of providence have such an aspect of benevolence and "good-will to man," what must be the character of the mercies which providence with open hand lavishes on the children of men? In the dispensations of providence, mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have embraced each other.

It is the atonement of Jesus Christ, that gives to divine providence this character and aspect. The atoning Mediator is, in priority of arrangement, the first in the series of the blessings of infinited providence, the first bubbling in the well-spring of the stream of favors, the first stone in the building of mercy. It pleased the Father to make him the magazine of all fulness of blessings, and it is out of *his* fulness that we all have received. It is because God spared not his own Son, but delivered him for us all, that he will with him freely give us all things. All blessings and mercies are dispensed in his name, by his authority, and on his account. It is only so far as our mercies are employed in harmony with the mediatorial work of Christ, that they prove real blessings unto us; they are otherwise traps and snares to our ruin. All good things, and sure mercies, are contained in the New Testament of Christ. No blessing has ever come to man, but what is contained in the Testament, and the Testament with all its blessings and mercies, is sealed with the

blood of the atonement.* The Lord Jesus Christ is constituted the sovereign of providence. In this character he sits on the right hand of God, and dispenses his favors. Blessings are dispensed by him, not by his divine authority, but by his mediatorial power; and his mediatorial power is, alpha and omega, founded in the atonement of his death.

2. The subserviency of providence to the designs of the atonement, becomes more evident when we consider that providential dispensations are administered with a special reference to the interests of the church of Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ is himself "the heir of all things, and all his people are "joint heirs with him." God has placed the Mediator in the throne of dominion at his own right hand in the heavenly places, and has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church." Therefore, the apostle says elsewhere, " All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Our blessed Savior in his intercessory prayer in the garden refers to this bearing of his mediatorial government generally, on the interests of the church especially. "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life, to as many as thou hast given

* In unison with these sentiments, are the views of the heavenly FLAVEL. —"Christ is the channel of grace and mercy; through him are all the *decursus et recursus gratiarum*, all the streams of mercy that flow from God to us, and all the returns of praise from us to God.

The purchase of all those mercies which providence conveys to us, is by his own blood: for not only spiritual and eternal mercies, but even all our temporal ones, are the acquisition of his blood. Look, as sin forfeited all, so Christ restored all those mercies again to us by his death. Sin had so shut up the womb of mercy, that, had not Christ made an atonement by his death, it could never have brought forth one mercy to all eternity for us. It is *with* Him that God *freely gives us all things*." "So that whatever good we receive from the hand of providence, we must put it on the score of Christ's blood; and when we receive it we must say, it is the price of blood: it is a mercy rising out of the death of Christ: it cost him dear, though it came to me freely." "These sweet mercies that are born of providence every day, are the fruits of *the travail of his soul*."—Flavel on Providence, vol. iv., p. 450. Ed. 1820.

him." This passage, while it shows that the mediatorial dominion of Christ is of wider diameter than his church, proves that the exercise of all his mediatorial authority and sway, is subservient to the interests of his people. The entire history of divine providence is an evidence of this special subserviency. The early history of the Jewish church shows how much the civil politics and the external condition of the nations of the earth were subservient to its protection and establishment. When the church has been in circumstances difficult, painful, and critical, providence in an unthought-of manner interposed to supply suitable means and proper instruments of deliverance—as in Egypt and Babylon, at the introduction of Christianity, and at the Reformation. The plots, and designs, and machinations of men and of nations, laid down with malicious craftiness, and nerved with wealth and power, have been, by a mediatorial providence, suddenly frustrated and destroyed. The dispositions of councils and states have been as rivers of water in the hand of providence, directed, or moderated, chastened, or over-ruled for the furtherance of the church of Christ. Some instances of particular providences in the lives and labors of individual members of the church supply the most decisive and interesting specimens of the manner in which the administration of the world is subordinate to the benefit of the church.

3. One marked design of the atonement of Christ is to magnify the law, and make it honorable. To this high design all the dispensations of providence are subservient. This is the end aimed at in the inflictions of Judgments on individual men and on communities, in the institution of sacrificial rites which have prevailed among all nations, in the miraculous revelations of the divine mind and will to prophets and other messengers, in the prompt and suitable answers that have been given to prayer, in the promulgation and ministrations of the gospel in the world, in the holy lives of renewed men, in the eternal punishment of incorrigible rebels, and in the glorious rewards of the heavenly state.

These considerations warrant the conclusion, that all things are made "*for*" Christ as Mediator, and "given" to his administration to subserve the ends of his government, and secure the purposes of his atonement.

SECTION IV.

The administration of the Atonement analagous to the administration of Providence.

PALEY observes, in his Natural Theology, that in all our widest and farthest researches into the productions of Creation, "we never get amongst such original, or totally different, modes of existence, as to indicate, that we are come into the province of a different Creator, or under the direction of a different will." Well had it been for the Christian church had such a thought suggested itself to our theological inquirers and polemical writers. It would have saved much controversy, heresy, persecution, and bloodshed. The analogy between providence and moral government BUTLER has established in a position unassailed and unassailable.

Many of the controversies which have agitated and unsettled the Christian church, have been conducted on the supposition, that in the works of redemption we come, so to speak, to the productions of a different God, other than the Lord of Providence and the Maker of the world. Human systems of theology seem to take this *datum* for their basis—but holy writ, sound reason, and daily experience shew that mankind are members of one immense system, pervaded by the same mind, regulated by the same will, and administered on the same general principles.

My present design is only to illustrate the analogy between the administration of the atonement and the dispensation of providence.

The providence of God has a universal aspect. His tender mercies are over all his works. He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth

rain on the just and the unjust. Such is the God of providence, and such also is the God of redemption. He has loved the world. He gave his Son to be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. He willeth not that any should perish, but come to the knowledge of the truth, and he commands all men every where to repent. Here are words of equal dimensions. If you will apply some cramping and abridging process to the phrases about redemption, try the same experiment on providence, and the result will show that you serve a system, and not receive the truth. On the universal aspect of providence you have no system to serve, but on redemption you have to cut and square these unmeasured expressions to ready-made creeds. Think not in your hearts that the God who openeth his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing, is different from the God who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. Say not that the God who has provided so bountifully for our bodily and temporal wants, has been niggard and scanty in his supply for the soul that is to live for ever.

The measures of providence are liable to failure. A medicine may fail, notwithstanding the virtue which providence has given it. The crop of the husbandman may fail, notwithstanding the provision that seed time and harvest time shall continue. The morbid fear of acknowledging such a liableness to failure in the measure of providence, is unaccountable, when God declares his own government of the Jews, under the theocrasy, to have failed of its ends. "In vain have I smitten them, they have refused to receive correction," Jer. ii, 30. The word of God distinctly and expressly recognizes the same liableness to failure in the great measure of atonement. Are you sure that it is not attachment to system, rather than attachment to the truth, that makes you hesitate to avow this? The scriptures openly state that the atonement may *become* of none effect in some cases, as in Gal. v, 2, 5. The apostle Paul was afraid of the Galatians, lest he had bestowed

upon them labor in vain, i. e., lest the ministry of the atonement should fail of its ends. The same apostle pleads with the Corinthians in earnest entreaty, that they would not receive the grace of God in vain, which he must have supposed to be a possible case. The prophet Isaiah introduces the Messiah, the Lord Mediator himself, saying, "I have labored in vain, and spent my strength for nought." In perfect harmony with this prediction are the very words of the Redeemer himself. "How oft would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?" As I have here only to *notice* the analogy between the atonement and providence, no candid reader will suppose that this language implies an utter failure—it merely implies susceptibility of failure. The failure in either case does not dishonor God, the blame of it is entirely with the sinner—and the possibility of the case is quite consistent with the laws of trial in a free and moral government.

The character of any measures of divine providence is to be tried by the fitness and adaptation, and design of such measures, and not at all by their final results. It is in this manner we always judge of an evil measure in the world. We judge of a dagger, a sword, a cannon, by its fitness and design. We judge of deceit, cunning, extortion and oppression, by their tendency and aim. Thus should we judge of providence. No wise man judges of a medicine by the death of a patient, of wealth by a miser, of learning by pedantry, or of liberty by anarchy. The deluge was a fit measure to clear the earth of evil doers, but you will not judge so by the final result. The final result does not prove that the selection of the family of Abraham would preserve a people from idolatry and sin—nevertheless the measure itself was adapted, and intended to do this. The miracles of Egypt and the wilderness were fitted and designed to bring the Israelites to obey God, and to trust him—but the result was otherwise. You do not judge of the ministry of Christ among the Jews by its final

result, but by its tendency and design. Why then will you judge of the atonement by its final results? Why not judge of it by its adaptation and fitness? If the final result of any measure turn out to be the same with the ultimate end for which it was instituted and adapted, then the final result is a good criterion to test the design and tendency of a measure. Our present state of trial and probation is adapted, calculated, and designed to work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory—but the *final* results in countless instances will prove otherwise. Will you say then, that this state was fitted and intended to prove thus disastrous? You are not to judge of probation by what it *may* be, or *shall* be in given instances, but by what *it is* now, by what it is fitted and intended to effect. Nor are you to judge of the atonement by what it *may* and *shall* be in some instances, "the savor of death unto death," but by what *it is* now—and what it is calculated and designed to be "the savor of life unto life" to all who will accept it.

General providence becomes available to particular cases, and thus becomes *particular providence*, by personal application only. So when a farmer takes into cultivation a piece of land from the common, on which no corn has ever grown before, he applies to his own individual case the broad offer and promise of general providence, that wherever there shall be a seed time, there shall be a harvest time. This general providence becomes as suitable and as effectual to him, as if it were made and intended for him personally, and for him only. He never thinks of consulting the secret decrees of heaven, to know whether such a plot of ground was eternally predestined to bear a crop. The general promise is quite enough for him. Thus he acts in the thousand affairs of life,—say in taking medicine, he never waits to unravel the private manuscripts of heaven for information; he merely ascertains the general fitness, adaptation and tendency of the remedy, and applies it to his individual case. Why will not men

act thus about the atonement. General atonement and particular redemption are no more inconsistent than a general and particular providence. No argument can be brought against a general atonement which will not fall with the same weight and edge upon a general Providence. There are no difficulties connected with particular redemption, which do not adhere as closely to particular providence. It would be regarded as the drivelling of silliness to argue that if there be a particular providence, there cannot be a general one. Of the same estimate is the reasoning, that if there be a particular redemption, the atonement can *not* be universal. As general providence becomes particular, *only* by personal application, so does general atonement become particular redemption. "Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely;" "and him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out." The supposed farmer never suspected that he was not personally intended in the general promise of Providence. If his crop has not answered his expectations, he sees and feels that the failure was owing to the nature of the soil and not to a deficiency in the promise; for it was never promised, that if he ploughed the rock, or sowed the sea shore, that he should have a harvest. And why should any sinner suspect that he is not personally interested in the atonement, and that the general atonement is not available to his particular and personal case? There is not in the scriptures, even the most remote allusion to any class of sinners, for whom Christ did *not* die. In the whole history of salvation and of man, there is not on record a single instance of a personal application of the general atonement *failing* of success. No personal applicant at the door of the atonement has ever perished. Christ has never said to any suppliant, "I never meant *you* individually." If any sinner who knows the atonement perishes, even in his destruction he sees, that his perdition is not through a deficiency in the atonement, for the atonement had never promised or provided, if he sowed to the flesh that from the flesh

he should reap everlasting life. If you heard some of the family of the supposed farmer quibbling about the divine decrees, and saying that they were never designed to be farmers, and that they did not think providence would ever bless them in such an undertaking, you would conclude that at heart they had no *liking for the work*. It is, I believe, universally true that no sinner quibbles about the secret designs of the atonement, but when he has no *liking* to the personal application of it, to condemn himself and to justify the divine government. When Paul's fellow passengers laid hold on the "boards and broken pieces of the ship," they had no time to quibble about secret decrees, they made the provisions of general providence available to their particular cases, and they all succeeded. Let every sinner go, and do likewise.

The Providence of God treats men as moral and free agents. Providence will do for a man nothing that he can do for himself. Providence will give seed to the sower, but it will not sow it nor reap the crop for him. Providence will fill the sails of the vessel with gales, but it will not steer at the helm. Providence makes no arrangement to encourage the idleness or inactivity of man, but all its provisions require and demand the full exercise of his agency. God promised to feed the Israelites in the wilderness with manna, but *they* were to gather and prepare it for food. Providence gives us our "daily bread," but not in baked loaves falling from the sky. Providence supplies us with raiment, but not in ready-made clothes descending upon us without any agency of our own. Providence has made bread to be the staff of life, but here it meets us as free agents, for if we do not exercise our own agency to partake of it, it will avail us nothing. The administration of the atonement meets man in the same manner, as a free agent. It does nothing for him that he can do for himself. It presents to his eyes, "Him whom he has pierced," but he himself must repent and weep. It shews to him "a new and a living way to the Father,"

but he himself must walk in it. It supplies him with a "sovereign and sufficient remedy," but he himself must "receive" it. If he refuse the balm of Gilead, it will not heal him. If he neglect this great salvation, it will not save him. If he will not have this man to rule over him, he will not be delivered from the kingdom of darkness. As providence deals with free agents so does the atonement. Take these statements about the atonement simply and candidly as they are presented to you, and you will admit, you *must* admit, that they are the real facts of the case. Will you venture to wrest them because they run not parallel with the lines of your theological system? These arrangements about the atonement are no more dishonorable to the character of God, than are the similar measures about the providence of God. Whatever may be the failures of providence during the economy of probation, we know that the upshot of the whole will be to the everlasting glory of God, and that all his perfections and purposes will appear guiltless of those failures. So will the administration of the atonement of Christ be unto God a sweet savor, even in them that perish. Though his death prove of none effect to those who were bent on being justified by the law, and to them who would not obey him, yet the illustrious Redeemer shall not fail of the travail of his soul. It should be remembered that the mere salvation of sinful men was not the only thing for which the soul of Christ travailed. He travailed for the glory of God, for the honor of the law, for the condemnation of sin, for the free overtures of the gospel, for the gracious acceptance of sinners, for the inexcusableness of wilful rejecters, and for the righteousness of their sorer punishment. Of all this travail he shall see. And while he is glorified in his saints and admired in them that believe, he will be justified and adored in the punishment of the refusers of his salvation, for the language of all intelligences will be "Amen, just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints."

These remarks shew that the moral Governor who directs the administration of the atonement, is not a Ruler different from him who regulates the dispensations of providence. In proceeding from one to another, we make no transition into the works and principles of a different God. We have already considered that the whole system of the universe was of a mediatorial character, and that, had it not been for the substituted sufferings of the Seed of the woman, there would have been no providence exercised towards the human race, for they would never have come into being. The dispensations of providence, therefore, must take their character from the medium through which they are administered; and this medium is the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Providence began with the atonement—it continued to be administered through the atonement—and it will for ever close with the closing dispensation of the atonement. The close of one is the close of the other. A season will come when there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, when the merits of the atonement will be no longer available to our world, when the time of probation for receiving the benefits of the atonement will close, and then will providence close for ever. Then, "Let him that is holy be holy still, and him that is filthy be filthy still."

From the whole of this train of observations, the inference is inevitable that God exercises no providence in this world with which the atonement has not a close and constant relation, and that they are both administered upon the same principles of moral government.

SECTION V.

A limited Atonement inconsistent with the administration of Providence.

An atonement designed for a limited number only, is inconsistent with the general claim which Jesus Christ makes to govern and regulate the duties, the affections,

the homage, and the destinies of every man on the face of the earth.

The Lord Jesus Christ claims the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. This passage is sometimes interpreted as meaning, that the inheritance which Christ claims consists only of his elect people among the heathen. If so, the rest of the heathen, who remain unconverted, are not rebels against Christ. Against what can they be said to have rebelled? Is it against his *claims* to them? No; according to this limited hypothesis; for he does not claim *them* personally, but only the elect who lived *among* them. In such a case their non-submission to his rule and government is no sin to be laid to their charge, for the mediatorial king is supposed to lay no claim to them. Can it be a crime in any of the heathen not to submit to a claim which has never been made on them? When the mediatorial Judge will say, "Slay those enemies that would not have me to rule over them," might they not silently murmur or retort, "*would not?*" Was it ever offered to us to have thee to rule over us? Didst thou ever lay claims to our homage and obedience? Suppose that these foes themselves dared not mutter such a retort, would not thoughts and hints of this kind suggest themselves to holy intelligences, who actually knew the truth and verity of the case? I should like to hear an abettor of limited atonement remonstrate and reason with a class of rebels who said, "We will not have this man to rule over us." His theological system would not require him to say, "You *will not* have him. Stop;—are you sure you *could* have had him? Did he ever *ask* you to have him? Since you have rejected him it is a proof that he never sincerely intended you to take him, or else he would have made you to have him before now." After such an address let him try to impress on their minds their accountableness to this mediatorial Ruler, the inexcusableness of their destruction, the guilt of their rejection of Christ,

and the justice of their sentence according to the truth of the case.

If Christ does not claim the homage and the service of every man, every man is not bound to take him for a King, and to yield obedience to him. No advocate of a limited atonement has ever seen a man to whom he could not say, on scriptural grounds, that he was bound to receive Christ as his Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ has made laws for every man on the globe, laws that bind every man to repent, and to believe the gospel, and to accept salvation for his sake. If every man on the earth has not yet heard of these laws, the fault is in them who were commissioned to publish them, and not in Him who enacted them. These laws were meant and intended for "the world," and they were to be "preached to every creature." There is no limitation in the commission, or in the aspect and design of the laws. With what grace, or on what principles could the Lord Jesus Christ make laws to make the homage of the world to him binding upon them, if he laid no claims to that homage? We would think it unaccountable for a king to send edicts and messages to a province where in reality he had no power and authority. Christ lays to the services of the sinner no claim which is not founded on the blood of redemption. The sinner would never have had his existence had it not been for the mediatorial interposition of "the Seed of the woman:" to that Mediator, therefore, he owes every thing: and it is on the ground of that mediation that Christ claims every thing that he is, and every thing that he has.

The authority which Christ has by his mediation over every man, is analogous to the authority which God by his providence has over every man. God's providential power over every man is founded in every man's relation to God. It is founded upon the immutable fact that God is the Creator and the Supporter of every individual. God had not authority over Jonathan, because that he was the Creator of David, but because that he was the Creator of Jonathan himself. He had not

power over Judas because that he was a benefactor to Peter, but because he was a benefactor to Judas himself. Of the same character is the mediatorial power of Christ over sinners. He had not power over Saul of Tarsus because he died for Stephen, but because he died for Saul. He had not authority to "gather" the inhabitants of Jerusalem under his mediatorial wings because he died for his disciples, but because he made atonement for these very citizens. His intercession for his murderers was not founded on his death for his friends, but on his death for these identical murderers. These must be self-evident verities.

On this subject, there is an argument of this kind frequently used: If Christ has authority over all, by an atonement for all, how comes it to pass that all are not saved? I can only say, that there is no difficulty in this question which does not bear as hard upon the providence of God, as upon the atonement of Christ. The long-suffering of God is as much, in tendency and design, "for salvation," as is the atonement. Let us form the query, by substituting the one word for the other, thus, "If God's long-suffering towards all, be designed for the salvation of all, how comes it to pass that all are not saved?" How will you parry it?

The fact is that both providential authority and mediatorial authority are exercised over free agents in a state of probation, and therefore liable to be rejected and renounced. The rejection of providential government does not invalidate the claims of God founded upon his relations to man as his Maker and Owner, nor does the rejection of the mediatorial sway of Christ founded on his relations to the sinner as his Mediator and Savior destroy his claims to homage and love. You do not limit "the goodness of God" to the boundaries of the mere number that it actually "leads to repentance," you know it is infinitely larger than that. You do not think that it is a dishonor to the "long-suffering of God" that it is not really successful "for salvation" to every sinner to whom it is exhibited. These things you yourself

hold as indisputable, and you do well. Then, why judgest thou thy brother, and why settest thou at nought thy brother, because that, on your own principles he thinks the atonement of Christ, like "the goodness of God," may be of wider extent than the number of sinners that actually repent; or like "the long-suffering of God," that it is not less glorious, because it does not actually save those who neglect and reject its benefits?

I am aware that the proposition, that the universal power of Christ is founded on his universal atonement, is combatted by the statement that, on this shewing, Christ has died for the beasts of the field, and for devils, over whom he certainly has authority. As brutes and devils are not under moral government ruled by hopes and fears, much less in a state of trial and probation, the quibble appears so irrelevant and sophistical as not to deserve a serious reply.

A limited atonement is inconsistent with the bountiful favors and mercies which Providence confers on all men universally.

If God has conferred any favors on offenders independently of the atonement of the Mediator, it is difficult if not impossible to say, why He could not confer all favors without it. If so, there was no necessity for the atonement. This sentiment leads straight-forwardly to Socinianism. We have already considered all providential favors as founded in the mediatorial atonement and administered on account of it. To evade this doctrine it is asserted that the ungodly obtain their mercies and favors, only for the sake of the elect, or through the church. Then, whenever an ungodly man asks a blessing on his food, he should ask it "for the elect's sake," not for Christ's sake—and he should return thanks to God in the church's name, but not in the name of Christ. The Papists would be glad of such a doctrine as would place at their disposal, the entire worthiness and merits of the church, though it would be difficult to persuade any church to believe that it has all this worthiness in it.

An atonement limited by the commercial principle of paying so much suffering for so many blessings, would be a measure of sheer absurdity. According to this commercial scheme, Christ has suffered as much as the sins of each of the elect deserved, and has purchased for them blessings in proportion to the sufferings endured for them, and these blessings he *demands* for them by his intercession. Then the reason why some Christians are so poor is, that the Lord Jesus Christ did not actually purchase more blessings for them. This also accounts for the low amount of their Christian graces and religious comforts; as Christ demands all that he has purchased for them, the amount communicated is small because the amount purchased is small. Here is no encouragement to grow in grace, unless we believe that more grace is purchased for us, than we actually possess. Every Christian and every minister, on this scheme enjoys as much usefulness and success as has been purchased for him, and no more. No other doctrine could provide so soft a cushion for those who are at ease in Zion.

Let us follow this commercial principle a little farther. The greater sinner an elect person is, the greater sufferings did Jesus Christ endure for him. The more Christ suffered, the more blessings did he deserve. Christ will by his intercession demand that every elect person shall have his due share in the purchased blessing. The result is, that the greater the sinner is, the greater is the amount of merit in his behalf, and the greater will be his share in the benefits of the atonement; and the more a man sins, the more will God confer blessings on him through his Son. More has been suffered, and consequently more has been merited for the sinner of sixty years, than for the sinner of six years, consequently the sinner of sixty will be entitled to more blessings than the sinner of six years. The meaning of such an arrangement is that the less a man sinned, the less has Jesus Christ merited and purchased for him; and the fewer his sins, the fewer will be the

blessings purchased for his inheritance. Such an atonement is utterly inconsistent with the whole of the manner, in which God has conferred, and has promised to confer, the mercies of his providence.

Limitation of the atonement to a certain number is at variance with the broad principles, on which Christ carries on his intercession in heaven.

I consider the intercession of Christ to consist in the four following articles. It consists in his public and official appearance before God as the mediatorial representative of man, and the President of the universe;—in his administration of all the providence of God, publicly and officially, on the ground of his atonement;—in his publicly and officially presenting to God all the services, and all the prayers, entrusted to him for presentation;—and in an official and public expression of his will, and desire, that these services and prayers may be graciously received and accepted.

In the first two articles the intercession of Christ is unbounded and interminable—of the same length and breadth, and heighth and depth, as the divine empire. In the last two articles the intercession of Christ is limited only by the limited services and prayers entrusted to him for presentation. He cannot possibly express a will or desire that services and prayers be received which are never offered. It would be ridiculous to argue that the power of presentation in a Receiver-general of the revenue is limited by the amount which he actually presents—that the liberty of a representative in the senate to present petitions is limited by the number actually presented—and that the ability of an advocate to plead is limited by the number of clients who actually employ him. Yet this is the kind of argument that has been employed to limit the intercession of Christ. And after throwing a boundary around the intercession of Christ, the abettors of a limited atonement have thought themselves as invulnerable as if they were in a magic circle.

There is no limitation given to the intercession of Christ, except the limitation which men give to it by their limited services and limited prayers. The intercession of Christ is capable of the same extent as his atonement. This very commensurateness is the ground of the apostle John's argument; "If ANY MAN sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of *the whole world*." The propitiation for the sins of *the whole world* is the ground of intercession for *any man* that sins, and *any man* that sins is said to "have" this advocate, as one to whom he can have access.

The Lord Jesus Christ has taught his people to make intercession on large principles for "all men." They have no grounds for intercession, but those on which Christ intercedes. He would not encourage them to make intercession of wider dimensions than his own. Their intercession for all men could be of no avail, if the blood that speaketh better things did not second their plea; and it cannot speak for all men, if it was not shed for all men.

The various specimens which Jesus Christ has given of his intercession, declare it to be open, broad, and unlimited, in its character and aspect. In the xvii. chapter of John he makes intercession distinctly for his ministers and for his church. When Christ says, "I pray for them, I pray not for the world," it is evident that by "*them*" he means his apostles, for he mentions one of "*them*" as being Judas, who was a son of perdition. He prays not for ministers only, but for "all *who shall believe* through their word." What is the design which Christ has in view in praying for ministers and believers? Hear his own language. He prays and intercedes—"that THE WORLD may believe that thou hast sent me." He prays that the world may believe. Believe what? Believe the Gospel—and whosoever "believes" shall be saved. The intercession of Christ then is a benefit and an advantage which is accessible

to the world, and in which the world is interested. Much stress is sometimes laid upon the words of Christ, "Father *I will* that they who follow me shall be with me." No one doubts the full force of this language. Had Christ in Gethsemane a will different from the "will" with which he wept over Jerusalem, and said, How oft "*would* I" have gathered thee? Is there any incongruity between his intercession in the garden, and his intercession on the cross? There he prayed for all his enemies—"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

It is known to all heavenly intelligences that all the favors that come to this sinful world, come under the direction, and at the intercession of Jesus Christ. One part of his intercession is his official and public administration of providence on the ground of his atonement. If he can only demand the blessings which he has purchased for a certain number, it is impossible, or at any rate, unintelligible, how he can officially, as public organ of government, distribute the bounties of providence universally to all men.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE WHOLE SYSTEM OF DIVINE TRUTH.

SECTION I.

Every Divine Truth related to the Atonement.

The entire collection of doctrines and facts, found in the sacred scriptures, is called a system of divine truth, not because their contents are given in a systematical arrangement of classes, and orders, and kinds, but because they present a complete and a harmonious body of information, upon all the subjects of faith and practice. We find in the scripture, the truths of theology, as, in nature, we find the truths of botany, mineralogy, or zoology, wisely strewn in copious and lovely variety. Yet, in both cases, these vast diversities form one complete whole system. Thus the analogy from nature—the reference of scripture to "first principles," and to "the proportion of faith,"—the abuse of truth when taken out of its connection,—the beauty of truth in its own practical bearing and position,—and the consistency of *one* truth with the entire mass of *all* truths, warrant us in regarding the scriptures as presenting to us a system of divine truth.

Of this entire system of divine truth, the Lord Jesus Christ is the central orb, in whom is gathered all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He is the very Sun of the system, full of grace and truth;—the Sun which first garnished the dark horizon of Eden with a day-spring from on high. The scriptures of the Old and New Testament present us with the whole "truth, as it is in Jesus," that, "in all things he might have the

pre-eminence," and be, as to the whole arrangement, "all in all." The Christian student,* therefore, will, as well from cordial inclination, as from public profession, be disposed to consider and to view every truth, according to its bearing and relation to the person and the work of Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life, the faithful and the true witness. Christ himself says, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." "The *truth*" is the pure verity and the simple reality of the case, as the state of things exist between God and man. Upon this case every truth bears, and with every such truth the atonement of Christ is connected:—the whole of his undertaking bears witness unto it.

I. All the truths contained in the prophecies of the scriptures are related to the atonement of Christ.

It was prophesied that this world should, in a given time, be favored with the appearance of an extraordinary personage. He was marked out as "the Seed of the woman, the Shiloh, the Prophet, the Wonderful, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Lord our Righteousness, the Desire of all nations, the Messenger of the covenant." The atoning Mediator claimed to himself the honor of being this very personage, to whom all the prophets bore witness.

Prophecy had revealed that this personage was to make his appearance in the character of the Deliverer

* Dr. RYLAND invited the Rev. ANDREW FULLER to address to him a series of monthly letters which, when finished, would form a complete body of divinity. After this arrangement, Fuller only lived to write nine. In the third letter he makes these remarks: "I do not know how it may prove on trial, but I wish to begin with the centre of Christianity,—*the doctrine* of the cross, and to work round it; or, with what may be called the heart of Christianity, and to trace it through its principal veins or relations, both in doctrine and practice. If Christianity had not been comprehended in this doctrine, the apostle, who shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God, could not have determined to know nothing else in his ministry. The whole of the Christian system appears to be *presupposed by it; included in* it, or to *arise from* it: if, therefore, I write any thing, it will be on this principle."—Fuller's works, vol. iv. p. 340. Ed. 1824.

Had this able divine lived to work out such a scheme of truly *Christian* divinity, the tone of British theology would, probably, have been much improved, and theological science much advanced.

of man. As the Seed of the woman, he was to bruise the head of the serpent that had enslaved and ruined man. He was to be for a sanctuary, and to come "bringing salvation." The Lord Christ was born a Savior, and he came to seek and to save that which was lost. God sent his Son to the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He is the Personage whom the prophets meant, for there is no salvation in any other, nor any other name among men given by which we must be saved. He was made under the law, that he might redeem them who were under the law.

The deliverance which, it was prophesied this personage was to effect, was a deliverance from sin. It was prophesied that he should make an end of sin, that is, to open a way for the just God to deal with a sinner as if he had not sinned; sin, being as it were, blotted out of the account. He was to effect this deliverance as a priest on his throne, and as a priest after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord Christ took upon him the name *Jesus* because he would deliver his people from their sins. He appeared as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. He has redeemed us from the curse of the law. The Jews misunderstood this class of prophecies, and interpreted them as signifying deliverance from civil thraldom, and from political evils. Whereas, he himself declares that he came to call sinners; and his gospel assures that there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

It was predicted that this personage should effect this deliverance from sin, not by power, but by his own substitutionary and vicarious sufferings. He was to be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He was to bear our griefs, and to carry our sorrows; to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. He was to make his soul an offering for sin, and to be numbered among transgressors. He was to be cut off, but not for himself. The meaning of these and the like passages, is that this illustrious Person was

to endure the sufferings with which the Father put him to grief, in the stead of our suffering the punishment due to us for our sins. This class of passages is referred to in the New Testament as being accomplished in the death and the atonement of Jesus Christ. He gave his life a vicarious ransom for many. He was made a sin-offering for us. He died the Just for the unjust. He was made a curse that the curse of the law might not be inflicted on man.

Hence it was prophesied that this deliverance from sin should be on account and for the sake of his sufferings. We were to have peace, through *his* suffering our chastisement, and by his stripes we were to be healed. To us guilty sinners who had no worthiness, he was to be the Lord our righteousness. It was on account of his intercession that gifts were to be given to men, even to the rebellious. The mediation of Christ fills up these prophecies. It is for Christ's sake that God forgives sin; it is by faith in the name of Christ that pardon is received by the sinner. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses from all sin; and every saved man is found not in his own righteousness, but in the righteousness of Jesus Christ only.

All the prophecies of the Scripture form a complete, connected, and harmonious system of truths,* in the

* "Since the prophecies, though delivered by various persons, were dictated to all by one and the same omniscient spirit, the different books and the scattered passages of prophecy, are not to be considered as the works or the sayings of different men, treating a variety of subjects, or delivering various and contradictory opinions upon the same subject; but as parts of an entire work of a single author—of an author who, having a perfect comprehension of the subject which he treats, and at all times equally enjoying the perfection of his intellect, cannot but be always in harmony with himself. We find in the writings of a man of any depth of understanding, such relation and connection of the parts of any entire work—such order and continuity of the thoughts—such consequence and concatenation of arguments—in a word, such unity of the whole, which, at the same time that it gives perspicuity to every part, when its relation to the whole is known, will render it difficult, and in many cases impossible, to discover the sense of any single period, taken at a venture from the first place where the book may chance to open, without any general apprehension of the subject, or of the scope of the particular argument to which the sentence may belong. How much more perfect, is it reasonable to believe, must be the harmony and concert of parts—how much closer the union of the thoughts—how much more orderly the arrangement—how much less unbroken the conse-

centre of which is the Lamb as if it had been slain from the foundation of the world. The doctrine, or the testimony concerning the mediation of Christ is the very spirit and life of prophecy, without which prophecy would be a body without a soul. The atonement of Christ is the central point, from which alone the eye of faith can command a view of the whole panorama of prophecy. All unfulfilled prophecy, as well as the already accomplished predictions, have their sum and substance in the character and the work of Jesus Christ. To deny the atonement is, to take away the life-blood of prophecy. The Biblical critics who reject the atonement, like the Jews who rejected the Messiahship of Christ, make the whole apparatus of their learning, to bear against the prophecies which predict a suffering Savior, and a Vicarious Sufferer. This fact shews that the doctrine of the atonement is the heart of Christianity. A Socinian divine puts the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah to critical torture, with the same unmercifulness and spleen as a Jewish Rabbi would put it. They both agree, like Herod and Pilate, to do away with the claims of Christ, to sap the foundation of Christianity, to throw away the blood of atonement as an unholy thing.

The New Testament regards the whole system of prophecy as having its scope and meaning, its spirit and truth, its life and glory, in the person and the atonement of Jesus Christ. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." To him gave all the prophets witness. Paul witnessed, both to small and great, saying no other things than those, which the prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people and to the Gentiles. The apostle Peter describes *salvation* as being according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through

quence of argument in a work which has for its real author that Omniscient Mind to which the universe is ever present, in one unvaried, undivided thought."—Bp. HORSLEY on 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. Sermons, vol. ii. p. 22. Ed. 1816.

sanctification of the spirit, and *the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*, and then says "of which *salvation* the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time, the *spirit of Christ* which was *in them* did signify when it testified before hand, the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow."

Here, then, we meet with a complete system of prophecies delivered by various men and in divers ages, and yet pointing to One remarkable Personage of the highest majesty and excellency. These prophecies treat of his person, his name, his character, his work, his life, his death, and his glory; each of them consistent with the others, and one casting light on all the rest. They all meet together and have their full accomplishment in One Person, and in no one else,—but in him most fully and clearly. Though they were delivered in various generations, they have but one object in view; and other events are hinted at only as they are connected with that object, and that object is the work of Christ. He is the *true* Seed of the woman, the true Prophet, the true Redeemer, the true Immanuel, the true Sun of Righteousness.

II. All the truths contained in the ceremonial institutions and sacrificial types are connected with the atonement of Christ.

It is confessedly true that many of the early Christian fathers, as well as many of the modern interpreters of types and shadows, have discovered similitudes, drawn parallels, pursued analogies, and pressed out truths that were never designed by such symbols. But such extravagant deductions of undisciplined imaginations supply no fair and valid arguments against a scriptural, sober, and judicious application of the typical character of the Jewish institutions and ceremonies.*

* Among the best works on this subject are, Mather's 'Figures and Types of the Old Testament.' 4to ed., London, 1705; and Dr. D. G. Wait's 'Course of Sermons before the University of Cambridge, in 1825.' London, 1826, 8vo.

The sacred scriptures indisputably assert that there is a designed coincidence and an intended connection between the religious institutions of the Jews and the essential doctrines of Christianity. Indeed, I might argue, that of so much importance in the system of divine truth, is the symbolical character of the Israelitish ceremonies, that the Holy Spirit has given one entire book —the epistle to the Hebrews,—not only to give a distinct recognition of that principle as designed by God to prefigure the realities of the gospel—but also to mark out and explain the relation and agreement between that principle, and the events and the doctrines of the mediation of Christ. Hence the Jewish institutions are called, "a shadow of good things to come, but the body [the substance] is of Christ." Col. ii, 16, 17. The gifts and sacrifices of the priest "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, *as* Moses was admonished *of God* when he was about to make the tabernacle." Heb. viii, 5. This tabernacle and the vessels of the ministry are called "the patterns of things in the heavens" and "the figures of the *true*." Heb. ix, 23, 24. The entire constitution of the Levitical law is described as "having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things." Heb. x, 1.

The body, the substance, the filling up, the meaning and truth, of all these ceremonial institutions, "is of Christ," and of him only. Extraordinary and illustrious characters were types of his person. Holy offices were shadows of his work and undertaking. The Jewish polity was an outline of his kingdom. The distinguished privileges of the theocracy were figures of his glorious rewards, the vicarious and expiatory sacrifices were representations of his glorious atonement. Various classes of types were employed to shadow forth the great truths of our salvation. Some types shadowed that man was a sinner;—others, that he had forfeited his life; others, that another life was substituted and accepted instead of it;—and others shadowed that this

substitution should take place in the Messiah, who, according to Isaiah would "make his soul an offering for sin," and be "led as a Lamb to the slaughter." Exod. xx, 7. Lev. vi, 3, 4; xvii, 11; xxiv, 16. Deut. xxii, 26.

The Jewish institutions taught the Israelites no truth which the gospel has not attached to the atonement of Christ, and revealed it, "the *truth* as it is in Jesus." The very truths that were obscure in the ceremonial types are now made clear and defined by the gospel. And the truths which appeared defective and imperfect in the Jewish ritual, now, in the light of the Christian atonement, stand out in prominent relief, and with a fulness of meaning which they never had before.

The sacred scriptures regard all symbolical truths as meeting in the atonement of Christ. This is evident from the facts, that sacrificial names and appellations are given to Christ; that Jewish sacrifices are represented as shadows of the satisfaction of Christ; that the value which was but nominal in them, is described as intrinsic in the sacrifice of Christ; that the efficacy which was but ceremonial in them, is declared to be real and actual in the atonement of Christ; that the sacrifice of Christ is pointed out as the last that should be offered for sin; and from the fact, that animal victims ceased to be sacrificed, after the Great Propitiation had been publicly offered by Christ. He himself was the truth of them all. He was the true sacrifice, the true priest, the true altar, the true temple, and the true Savior.

III. All the doctrinal truths of divine revelation are connected with the atonement.

All doctrinal truth is the mind of God, the expression of his thoughts; and all his thoughts have a reference to the atonement. The Person of Christ is the centre of every truth, and the Mediation of Christ is the circumference of every truth. In him all truths live, move, and have their being. The atonement magnifies and honors every truth implied in the reality of the ex-

ercise of a moral government in the world. It supposes and distinctly recognizes the verity and the reality of the sinfulness and ruin of mankind. It is itself a proof and a specimen of the truth of the introduction into the divine government of a compensative scheme for the purpose of restoring sinful man. It exhibits the honest sincerity of the divine invitation addressed to sinners in the clear light of the "*demonstration* of the Spirit." It supplies the most splendid evidence of the truth and certainty of the promises of the gospel, and gives the most solemn assurances of the reality of spiritual blessings.

Thus there is no class of truths which may not be either proved or explained by the principles of the atonement. And there is no class of truths which does not lose weight and efficacy by being severed from the person of Christ. Every truth separated from Christ, like a branch lopped from the living tree, loses its freshness and beauty, and languishes and dies. The providence of God has given us melancholy instances of the corruption and unwholesomeness to which any truth tends when apart from Christ. See the high and noble truths of the Old Testament—truths which elevated the minds of Abraham and Moses, which ravished the heart of David, and which tuned Isaiah's harp to the high pitch of even gospel times—look at them, in every age of the Jews, from the time of Malachi to the present day—look at them in the Cabbalistic inanities of the ancient Rabbis, in the turgid puerilities of modern Judaism, and you will perceive how much they have lost of sanctity, dignity, and energy; and how void, and powerless, and lifeless they have become. "How is the fine gold become dim?" How will you account for this painful circumstance in the history of divine truth? One awful fact explains the whole. The Jews have alienated these glorious truths from their vital connection with the sacrificial atonement of Messiah, "the Christ of God."

Look again at the great and mighty truths of the New Testament. See them in their healthiness, vigor, and beauty, in the ministrations of the apostles, in the religious affections of the primitive churches, in the masculine energies of the Reformation, and in the glow and power of modern Revivals. Then look at them in the ice-bound realms of Socinian theology, and how wan, and cold, and dead, and putrid are they! If they glow,—it is not with the charming glow of healthy life-blood, but with the clammy warmth of controversial heat. If they move, it is not with the vigorous stirrings of an internal vitality, but with the galvanic convulsions of a fitful elocution. If they preserve their form and fashion, it is because a cold and indurating philosophy has embalmed them. They are the same truths, but they have been separated and banished from Christ, whose person is the Sun of Revelation and whose atonement is the Heaven of Truth.

The Lord Jesus Christ is represented in the scriptures as the Magazine and Repository of all truth, in whom are *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. There is not a truth pertaining to God and man, to eternity and time, but is connected with him. To the inquiry of the church and of the world, "What is truth?" the Mediator replies, "I am THE TRUTH." The truth is in Jesus as it is in no one else. In no one else is the truth perfect, complete and full. In no other is it clear, unadulterated. In no one else is *every* truth; every truth in its due proportions; every truth in all its power and bearings; every truth, in full harmony with every other truth. In Christ is, the truth, the truth completely, and the truth exclusively. The truth as it is in Jesus is sincere without falsehood, genuine without counterfeit, steady without perfidy, real without fiction, exact without error. In him it is right without any wrong, honest without fraud, perfect without mutilation.

It is this connection of every truth with the mediation of Christ, that makes real Christianity to be not afraid

of the progress of any class of truths. Sometimes in the infancy of any given Science, plausible theories are advanced as having a tone of contradiction to Scriptural verities, but the discipline of a mature philosophy never fails to show that the contradiction is not real. Truth in man, is partial, sectarian, and jealous; but truth in the Christian system is full, universal and free; and no more fears the developements of any truths, than the mighty ocean dreads the digging up of new wells, or the Sun the new discoveries of optics.

IV. The atonement is inseparably connected with all practical truth.

The atonement is the centre of duties, as well as of doctrines. This is clearly proved and illustrated in the Apostolic epistles. The New Testament writers, after laying down the "doctrine of the cross," erect a peerless structure of holy duties, and practical truths. They exhibit the atonement as establishing every duty required in the moral law; and they preach the moral law as establishing every duty required in the Gospel. The atonement "destroys" no command. It "makes void" no duty. The gospel of the atonement brings a new class of duties to bear on the sinner, as believing in Christ, repenting for sin, &c. These are duties which the moral law, as such, never could ask of any man. But now, since the provisions of the divine government has annexed these requirements to the atonement which has answered all the ends of the law, the law unites with the gospel in making them obligatory upon every sinner who hears them.

Some declared foes, and some false friends of the atonement, have represented it as destroying all practical truth and duty. The atonement on the contrary distinctly recognizes all the practical truths of the moral law as still binding on all—shows the reasonableness of the demands of those practical truths,—and enforces them with an accumulated amount of arguments and motives.

The gospel connects every practical truth, with the atonement of Jesus Christ. Observe how the apostles teach the most plain and common duties of life; such as the duties of husbands and wives, the duties of parents and children, the duties of masters and servants, of kings and subjects, &c. To enforce these duties, they do not go for arguments to the law of nature, to the claims of relationship, or to political economy; nor do they confine themselves to the moral law. No; they go at once to the mediation of Christ; husbands are to love their wives because Christ loved his church, and servants are to obey their masters that they may adorn the doctrine of God their Savior in all things.

They teach that these practical truths are to be performed by the assistance of the grace of Christ; that the practice of such truths is to be the effect of faith in Christ; that these duties are to be done in the name of Christ; that they are acceptable to God only through the merits of Christ; and that they will be rewarded by Jesus Christ himself. In duties as well as in doctrines, the apostles knew nothing but Christ, and him crucified. It was the cross of Christ that gave the name and the designation to their system—it was "the preaching of the cross." The opponents of practical truth they called, "the enemies of the cross of Christ;" and the renunciation of holy duties, they regarded as making "the cross of Christ of none effect."

If these hints will be regarded as sufficiently defined to pencil out the lines of connection between the entire circle of truth,—whether in predictions and types, or in doctrines and duties,—and the great atonement of Christ, their end will be answered.

SECTION II.

A limited Atonement inconsistent with the whole System of Divine Truth.

I. An atonement limited to a certain number of sinners is inconsistent with the truths revealed in the prophecies of the Old Testament. Scriptural prophecy supplies us with the best specimens of the theological principles of the church of God under the patriarchal and Jewish dispensations. It should be borne in mind, that the prophets promulgated their principles and sentiments, "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and that, consequently, their doctrine was "the MIND of the Spirit." These holy men of God seem sometimes not to have understood at once the fulness, the extent, and the majesty of the stupendous doctrines wich they announced. They therefore investigated, "inquired, and searched diligently what the Spirit of Christ, which was in them did signify, when it testified about the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Such a 'diligent search,' conducted under such auspices, would be likely to terminate in a correct knowledge of the truth of the case. These doctrines of prophecy, Jesus Christ himself opened and expounded as teaching that he ought to suffer and enter into his glory. These are the very doctrines which the apostles preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; and it is into these doctrines that the angels desire to look. These doctrines, therefore, deserve to be regarded by us, in this inquiry, as legitimate sources of information on the theological creeds of the Jewish prophets.

The true doctrines of the prophets teach us, that the benefits of the death of Christ were of universal extent. It was prophesied that in the Seed of Abraham, that is in Christ, *all* the nations of the earth should be blessed, Gen. xx, 18. Gal. iii, 16. The meaning of this is, that Jesus Christ in his work and offices would be, a

Blessing, unto all the nations of mankind. In harmony with this are the very numerous prophecies which relate to the call of the Gentiles. Isaiah predicted that God gave his Son to be a Salvation unto the end of the earth, Isa. xlix, 6. Joel prophesied that the influences of the Spirit should be "poured upon *all* flesh," Joel ii, 28, 29. The aspect of the whole of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah,—an epitome of the divinity of the prophets,—is unlimited and universal.

The word "ALL" has often been most uncandidly and dishonorably tortured and wrested, to mean a generality of kinds and degrees, and not a universality of the mass of the human race. Prophecy, however, supplies us with one text at least, that has bid stubborn defiance to all theological tortures. It is Isa. liii. 6, "ALL we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned EVERY ONE to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us ALL." Some of the advocates of particular atonement have challenged their opponents to present one single text in which the word "*all*" means indisputably every individual of the human race. Here it is. The word "all" in the last part of the sentence means the "all" mentioned in the first part; and both mean the "every one," in the middle portion of the verse. If you apply to the word "all" in the first sentence, the torturous criticisms which are generally employed on the word "all" in the last sentence, you offend equally against sound interpretation, theological fairness, and logical deduction.

Let us now see how these doctrinal prophecies were understood by the apostles who preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Peter, after "inquiring" into the testimony of Moses and "all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after," uses these remarkable words; "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, 'and in thy seed, shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him

to bless you, in turning away EVERY ONE of you from his iniquities,'" Acts iii, 25, 26. A preacher who did not view the mediation of Christ in all its amplitude and extent would have used a language much more cautious and measured. He again says, "of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, (*He is Lord of all*)—to him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name *whosoever* believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins," Acts x, 34, 35, 36, 43. Paul preached to Jews and Gentiles every where "that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance;" yet he says, that he had learnt this universal call from the doctrines of the prophets. "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both *to small and great*, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." Acts xxvi, 20, 22.

Many more passages of this kind might be cited, but these are sufficient to show that, in the judgment of the apostles, the doctrines of the prophets taught a universality of design in the Mediatorial undertaking of the Messiah. It was a leading object of the apostles' ministry to prove, against the sectarian limitations of the Jewish expositors of their day, that the blessings announced in prophecy had a designed relation to all the nations of the earth. The prophecies that predict the final results which the atonement shall infallibly produce, do not weaken the others which describe its universal aspect. The same prophet that asserts that "the Son of God shall see his seed, and that the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands," takes up the language of blame, and remonstrates with the disobedient, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the Lord revealed." The spirit of prophecy plainly foretels that the mediation of Christ will not produce

the same effects on all that is, that it will not have its intended effects upon all to whom it shall be exhibited. It is foretold that Christ and his atonement will be "despised and rejected of men"—be a "stone of stumbling and a rock of offence," and "the stone which the builders refused."

These disastrous effects are not the consequences of a limitation in the design of the atonement, but they *result*, from a deliberate and an obstinate non-compliance with the great purposes of the atonement. The men who reject Christ dislike the atonement. They stumble and are offended at the principles involved in it—the principles of the goodness of the law, the wickedness of sin, and salvation by grace,—and, therefore, they reject it and perish.

Hear the apostle Peter's exposition of this prophecy. "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed," 1 Peter ii. 4—8. God exhibits his Son as the foundation of salvation to men. In this character he is "disallowed of men,"—they will not submit to it, but are "disobedient" to the arrangement. As they will not comply and obey, they "stumble," and fall, and perish, and that, according to the "appointed" order of the provision. Are we from this to infer that they were appointed to disobey and stumble? What?—that they were appointed to "disallow" Christ, and yet be blamed and punished for it? The passage teaches no such thing. It is an "appointment" of the constitution of providence that whosoever will not eat food will die. Will any one argue from this, that there are human beings "appointed" not to eat food? Such an inference would unsettle every wheel in providence.—It is an "appointment" of the dispensation of the atonement that whosoever will not receive this remedy, will die and perish. Is it therefore sane and logical to argue that there are human beings "appointed" not to take the remedy? Not so did Peter understand it. He says that, "in preach-

ing peace by Jesus Christ, God is no respecter of persons." And again he says, "GOD *hath showed* me that I should not call *any man* common or unclean," that is, God has taught me that in my ministry I should not deem *any one man* an outcast decretively excluded from the benefits of the atonement of the Gospel. From such premises the inference is fair, that an atonement limited to a certain number, is at variance with the truths in the prophetical doctrines concerning the extent of the Messiah's mediation.

2. A limited atonement is inconsistent with the truths embodied in the typical representations which shadowed forth the character and extent of the redemption of Christ. The divine ordinance of sacrifice, revealed to Adam and Eve, was as open and accessible to Cain, and as available for him, as it was in the case of Abel. God himself appealed to Cain's personal knowledge of such an arrangement. "If *thou* doest well, shalt *thou* not be accepted," Gen. iv. 7. Doing well, here means, doing like Abel, that is, offering a sacrifice for his sins, in obedience to the divine arrangement. In acting thus, he would do well and be *accepted*. Here was no sovereign limitation, no decretive exclusion.

God acted upon the same general principle towards the antediluvians in the provision of an Ark for their safety. The aspect of this expedient was of a universal character. All were invited to come to the ark: and the rejecters are blamed for not seeking safety in it. The apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews says, that Noah's ministry concerning the ark "*condemned* the world." It is impossible to show how any could be condemned for not being saved in the ark, if the ark was never verily intended for them, and if they were never sincerely invited and pressed to come into it.

The sacrifice which Noah, after the flood, offered to God, presents a distinct and a bold outline of many of the great principles of the true Atonement; especially, of its universal extent. The sacrifice of Noah was offered to propitiate the favor of God towards the in-

terests of a ruined world. Through God's satisfaction in this sacrifice, he confers the grant of the whole world upon Noah, and promises blessings to all the unnumbered nations and generations of the entire world. The world since then has awfully abounded in sins and evils, but still God is distributing the treasures of his goodness with a bountiful hand. All this is to be traced to his infinite pleasure expressed through the "sweet savor" of Noah's sacrifice. Men may, indeed, neglect both "seed-time and harvest," but they cannot ascribe their conduct to any excluding or limiting decree. The apostle Paul seems to refer to this very sacrifice as an adumbration of the atonement of Jesus Christ, "who gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor," Eph. v, 2. It is through this true sacrifice that every blessing comes to our world. It is in Christ that God reconciles the world to himself without dealing with it according to its sins. It is on account of the mediatorial atonement that God gives to his Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.

Take another prefiguration of the unlimited extent of the atonement of Christ in the provision of the Brazen Serpent. The sacred scriptures inform us of the designed extent, and of the actual result of this expedient of mercy. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass that *every one* that is bitten, when *he* looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten *any man*, when *he* beheld the serpent of brass, *he* lived." Num. xxi, 8, 9. The design of this expedient was not limited to those who "looked," but it extended to all who were "bitten." If any bitten did not "look," they could not ascribe their death to an exclusiveness in the provision, but to their own conduct. The Lord Jesus Christ considered this provision as an apt illustration of the extent of his

own atonement. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." John iii, 14, 15. This universality he explains and confirms, by asserting in the 17th verse, "that the *world* through him might be saved."

This universality is further shadowed forth in the sacrifices appointed by the Jewish law, especially by the lamb of the daily offering, and by the sacrifice offered up at the yearly feast of expiration. Num. xxviii, 3, 4. Lev. xvi, 7—34. It is in reference to the lamb of the daily burnt offering that our Lord is more particularly called a Lamb. It is in this character that John the Baptist describes Christ as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the *sin of the world*," plainly implying that there was the same relation between the atonement of Christ and all the inhabitants of the world, as there was between the lamb of the burnt offering and the whole of the Jewish nation. It is in reference to this that the apostle John in his Apocalyptic visions describes the atonement of Christ as "a Lamb in the midst of the throne of God," that is connected with all the measures appointed by the throne, and with all the services received by the throne.

On the great day of the annual expiration the atonement of the scape-goat was offered unto the Lord. This atonement had a universal influence upon all the interests of all the Jewish tribes. The provision runs thus: "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him *all the iniquities* of the children of Israel, and ALL their transgressions in *all* their sin—and the goat shall bear upon him *all* their iniquities into a land not inhabited" And again, "The Priest shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation; and this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for *all* their sins once a year." These sacrifices of the Jews were related to them *all*, were designedly offered up *for* all,

and were truly available to all. The atonement effected by them was unlimited in design and aspect. This ceremonial atonement did not consist in the sacrificial victim suffering the identical punishment due to the offender, but in substitutionary sufferings; for the blasphemer was to be stoned to death, but the sacrifice for him was not to die by stoning, Lev. xxiv, 16; v, 4—6. Nor did the Jewish atonement consist in inflicting upon the victim a certain amount of torture and pain, in proportion to the number and enormity of the sins to be expiated. The instructions which Moses gave concerning these sacrifices are distinct, minute, and even punctilious; but there is not a jot nor a tittle in them all to warrant an opinion held by some, that Christ would have had to suffer more, had there been more to be saved; and less, had the number of the elect been less.

Universal as was the bearing of these sacrifices yet they were susceptible of failure. They might fail of their design, not through a deficiency of extensiveness in them, but through the voluntary neglect or misimprovement of those for whom they were offered. The atonement offered on the great day of annual expiation was intended to take away "all the iniquities of the children of Israel," Lev. xvi, 22. This the atonement, would effectually accomplish to all those who, according to the arrangements of that atonement, "afflicted their souls, and did no manner of work on that day." If it was offered designedly for all the tribes, will it not infallibly secure all its ends to all the tribes? No, "For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted [in contrition] in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people," and that notwithstanding the atonement offered for him, Lev. xxxiii. 27. The Jews, when they saw these persons "cut off," because they neglected the provisions of the atonement, never thought of arguing that the atonement was never designed for them. It seems to me, then, that all the leading principles of the Old Testament types and shadows are

opposed to the doctrine that limits the atonement of Christ to a certain amount of sin, or to a certain number of sinners.

3. The opinion that the atonement was designed for a few only, is opposed to the entire system of doctrinal truths revealed in the scriptures. A full discussion of this proposition would require a volume, rather than a page or two; my limits therefore will only allow me to supply a few hints of proof and elucidation. Were this opinion consistent with scriptural doctrine, it would be possible to express it in scriptural language. At least the spirit and the *animus* of the opinion would be found in scriptural statements, if not the *letter* and the form of it. Let any one find chapter and verse that will justify such language as the following: "Christ died for the elect, and the elect *only*." "He gave himself a ransom for the sheep *only*." "Whom he predestinated, them he also purchased, and whom he purchased, them he also called." No; there is no rule in Biblical language that will account for such a dialect as this. Let any one find a statement in the scriptures that Christ did *not* die for every man. Let some class of sinners be pointed out to us which the scriptures declare to be unatoned, and unredeemed, or unransomed. Let any abettor of a limited atonement search and try to embody his opinion in some express declaration of scriptures,

> "——*sudet multum, frustraque laboret,*
> *Ausus idem.*"

As this opinion cannot be expressed in scriptural language, as it cannot be pronounced in "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth," so likewise it cannot be made to run parallel and to tally with scriptural doctrines. To give an enumeration of the doctrines opposed by this opinion, would be to furnish a catalogue of all the truths of revelation. All the doctrinal truths of the scriptures may be divided into two classes, viz. truths

contained in the principles of divine moral government, and truths revealed in the promises of the gospel; and a limited atonement strikes against them all. Let a few examples suffice. By disputing the reality of the moral Governor's wish that all men should be saved, come to the knowledge of his truth and comply with his laws;—by denying that all men are bound, on the principles of individual accountableness, to accept of Jesus Christ as their Savior,—by pleading that the elect, whose debts are supposed to have been paid, *must* be saved, as the moral law can never reach them again; and by asserting that a vast number of souls shall be sorely punished for not doing what they had no power to do, and for not accepting what was verily never intended for them—this opinion militates against every truth in the principles of moral government. It clashes equally with all the truths revealed in the gospel. The gospel declares that by the "*true*" grace of God, Christ tasted death for *every* man; but by the false grace of this pretended theology, Christ tasted death only for *some*. The scriptural gospel addresses a message to every creature to believe in Christ, to every man every where to repent, but the invitation addressed by this "other gospel," is cramped, partial, and select. It sometimes, indeed, feigns to take up the terms of a general call into its dialect, but its general call is founded not upon the truth of the fact that Christ is a propitiation for all, but, upon a *peradventure* that *perhaps* there may be *some* among the hearers whom God *may* call. It impeaches the gospel of insincerity, and gives a character of uncertainty to all its offers. It exhibits the grace of God as ostentatiously giving a free and generous invitation to all men, to come and share in the feast of its provisions, while according to the real truth of the case, it sincerely intends that only a few should partake. Many a trembling sinner, living under the public ministrations of this theology has thought that, perhaps *he* was *meant* in the gracious invitation, that *possibly*, he might *venture* to *hope* that Christ would receive him. Now, in the scrip-

tural doctrine, Christ says, "*Whosoever* will, let him come," and "him that cometh I will in *nowise* cast out;" but the business of the abettors of this other doctrine is, to declare that this cheering assurance is *not* to be received in the latitude and extent expressed.

The opinion of a limited atonement is unnecessary either to the support or to the elucidation of any scriptural doctrine. Many, I conceive, have taken up this opinion from an apprehension that it is essentially necessary to the truth of such doctrines as the sovereignty of divine grace, the limited intercession of Christ, and the certainty that the Son of God shall not lose his reward. But this opinion is utterly unnecessary to the maintenance of these doctrines. The doctrine of gracious sovereignty is clearly asserted in the scriptures, and daily acted upon in the affairs of providence, and the government of the world. Take, for instance, the doctrine of predestination to life. This doctrine derives no support from the opinion that Christ died only for the elect. No one example can be given of the holy scriptures expressing any thing like the sentiment that God predestinated or elected a select number in order that Jesus Christ might die for them, and for them alone. Yet the doctrine of sovereign election is not at all weakened by the absence of such an assertion. It is true that Christ died that he *might* redeem us from all iniquity, and [in order] *to* purify unto himself a peculiar people. This expresses only *one* end, and one *result* of the atonement. Even this text does not so much as hint that Christ redeemed any because they *were* a peculiar people. It should also be remembered that the apostle gives this very text as an illustration of the grace that bringeth salvation unto *all men*. Tit. ii, 14—16.

As an instance how easily things are taken for granted, I might mention that thousands have taken the opinion of a limited atonement to be one of the doctrines of Calvinism. But Calvinism it is not. At least it is not the Calvinism of Calvin's Institutes, nor, I believe of Calvin's Expositions. I have consulted

the Institutes for the very purpose of ascertaining this point, and I could not find one passage that asserted any such doctrine as that Christ died for the elect only, or that he did *not* die for the reprobates. We might now then reverse the advice of Horsley and say, "Let those who boast in the name of Calvin *know* what Calvinism is." Again by the same process of easy assumption it has been received as a settled point that the doctrine of the universality of the death of Christ is rank Pelagianism. Bishop Davenant, on the contrary, has shewn in his Dissertation* on the Extent of the Death of Christ, that so far from this being a doctrine peculiar to Pelagius, it was the doctrine of all the Fathers before the rise of Pelagianism, and the doctrine of even Augustine himself, the masterly champion of predestination against Pelagius. Well then, without enumerating the writers of the New Testament, and a goodly company of other names renowned in theology, here we discover that Augustine and Calvin, the ablest and the most strenuous advocates of divine sovereignty, thought the doctrine of predestination safe and invulnerable, without the abutment of particular atonement.

A limited atonement is as unnecessary to the doctrine of sovereign influences, as it is to the doctrine of predestination. The scriptures never ascribe the sovereignty of divine influences to a predestinated limitation in the provisions of the atonement. It is never assigned as a reason for the communication of divine influences to any person, that that person was one of the number for whom Christ died. The absence of divine influences from nations and individuals is never accounted for on the ground that Christ had not died for them. Our friends themselves believe that there are instances of the withdrawment of gracious influences from churches and people.

* The *Dissertatio de Morte Christi* has lately been ably translated into English by the Rev. Josiah Allport, and appended to his translation of 'Bp. Davenant's Exposition of the Epistle to the Colossians.' 'Davenant on the Death of Christ,' deserves a diligent perusal from every student of the doctrine of atonement. It abounds in sound criticism, and powerful reasoning.

How will they account for this? Will they say that divine influences stopped at the boundary which limited the atonement? that they stopped because the merits of the death of Christ stopped? that the current of divine influence could proceed no longer, as hitherto the channel of the atonement went, and no farther? Will they say that the influences of the Spirit were withdrawn from the churches of Asia Minor, because there were no more people there for whom Christ died? No. The scriptures never teach that divine communications are confined or withdrawn because the atonement is limited or bounded. And it is triumphantly proved by the history of the Christian church, that the most powerful defenders of the doctrine of divine influences have been found among those divines who were the most pertinacious advocates of universal atonement.

The limitation of the intercession of Christ is not owing to a limitation in his atonement. The scriptures no where say so. It is never hinted that the persons for whom Christ does not intercede, are persons for whom he did not die; or that the persons for whom he intercedes are alone the persons for whom he died. The aspect of his intercession is as wide as the aspect of his atonement. He makes intercession for all believers, that through them the WORLD might *know* that God sent him; and for the world to *know* Jesus Christ whom God hath sent, is life everlasting. The ability of Christ to intercede for all is limited, in the same manner as God's ability to answer the prayers of all. The atonement limits neither of them. They are limited on other principles. God has never undertaken to answer prayers and requests which are never addressed to him, and Christ has never undertaken to plead causes which have never been committed to him. Nothing can be more unlimited than this declaration: "If any man sin, we have an advocate—who is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world."

Neither is this opinion necessary to prove the certainty that Christ shall not lose his reward. A limited atone-

ment can never prove it. The proofs of this must be sought from other sources, such as the grace, the counsel, and the faithfulness of God. There are many circumstances in this hypothesis which render it too weak to support the glorious doctrine raised on it. 1. It supposes that the reward of Christ consists principally, if not entirely, in a numerical salvation of souls; whereas there are other elements in his reward, *e. g.*, the glory of the divine perfections, the vindication of the eternal law, his infinite joy in all this, &c. &c. 2. It takes for granted that the atonement has no ends answered in the destruction of those who reject it, whereas it is a sweet savor unto God even in them that perish. 3. It supposes that Christ is sure of his reward only on commercial principles, that as he has paid so much suffering for so many souls, God must in commutative justice recompense him in return "*quid pro quo*," which entirely destroys the morality of the atonement. Christ is never said to be sure of some, because he had purchased some. The saints in heaven sing the song of truth, when they say, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood;" but this does not imply, nor is there any other text that implies that those who are *not* in heaven, are not there, because Christ had *not* redeemed them with his blood.

This train of reasoning convinces my mind that the hypothesis of particular atonement, is a body foreign to the system of divine doctrines, as revealed in the scriptures.

IV. It remains for me to shew, that a limited atonement is inconsistent with the system of practical truth as revealed in the scriptures. The scriptures sum up all practical truth in loving God with all the heart, and loving our neighbor as ourselves. No theological system has ever yet said, in express words, that it is not the duty of all men to love God with all the heart. But let any one take his position within the magic circle of this limited hypothesis, and let him try to inculcate the duty of love to God on all the excluded reprobates. What argument will he use? What motives can he ex-

bibit? He may amuse them with the metaphysical prolusion that men should love God on account of what He is; but he will never teach them the New Testament language, "we love Him *because* He first loved us." Or from his position let him try to preach, that men ought to love their neighbors as themselves, and to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them. In the whole history of theologians, no one has ever yet been found who would have admired particular redemption, had he believed *himself* to be one of the excluded reprobates.

There are, however, many duties required of all men towards Christ, which could only arise from the fact, that Jesus Christ had died for them. I will present a few as samples. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and *thou* shalt be saved." This is addressed to every man who hears the gospel. One man will not be saved by believing that Christ died for another, but for *himself*. Peter did not call on the sinners of Jerusalem to believe, on the ground, that for ought they knew, Christ had died for them; but he assures them, that if they believe, there is in Christ a salvation provided *for them*. "God now commandeth all men, every where, to repent." Does the scripture any where shew that God requires a repentance that has no connection with the atonement of his Son? There is no motive for any sinner to repent, unless there be an atonement for him. Yet God commands *every* man, *every* where, to repent. The repentance of *any* man will not be available except through an atonement for *that man;* therefore, a call from God to every man, must be founded on an atonement for every man, *in propria persona*.

Peter teaches Simon Magus, "Pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." Prayer goes to the throne of grace,—but God has no throne of grace except the atonement of his Son. What had Simon Magus to do with the throne of grace and prayer, if Christ did not die for him? Would he not have been a thief and a robber to go and draw on pro-

visions which had never been intended for him? Yet the doctrine of the apostle teaches *him* to pray for pardon—though God can grant no pardon, and hear no prayer, but through the death of his Son.

Paul inculcates the duty of love to Christ at the peril of being Anathema Maranatha, in case of neglecting it. *My* duty to love God arises, not from the fact that he made my neighbor, but from the fact that *He* made *me*. And my duty to love Christ arises, not from the fact that he died for my neighbor, but from the fact that he died *for me*. Now, the apostle uses the terms of a general message—"if *any* man loves not the Lord Jesus Christ." If *any* man, and *every* man, is to love Christ at all, he is to love Him as his Mediator, Redeemer, and Savior; for the gospel would never pronounce *any* sinner accursed for not loving Christ as his Redeemer, if the fact were, that Christ never had redeemed *that sinner*.

The same apostle, in 1 Tim. ii, 1—6, teaches that supplications, prayers, and intercessions, should be made for *all* men. Why? Because God wills that *all* men should be saved; and because Christ gave himself a ransom for all. We cannot pray for devils, because we have no testimony that Christ died for them. But you can pray for *all* MEN, because you have a clear testimony that Christ tasted death for *every* man.

This latter class of practical truths are *duties*,—they are duties incumbent upon *every* man who hears of them; yet they never would have been duties upon any, but for the mediation of Christ. The theory of a limited atonement clashes with all these duties; indeed, it destroys the obligation to observe them, except merely on those who are within the enclosures of particular redemption. If all the hearers of the gospel are not under obligations to discharge these New Testament duties, then, they do not sin against Christ by neglecting them, for *they*, according to this hypothesis, actually *owe* no such duties to Him. It is hardly necessary to add another line to say, that such an opinion is subversive of all practical truth.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO SIN.

SECTION I.

The Atonement a demonstration of the Evil of Sin.

It was a cardinal article in the creed of the apostles that Jesus Christ "died for sin." They exhibit the Lord Jesus Christ as being a sin offering—as bearing our sins in his body on the tree—as condemning sin, and taking away the sin of the world. Indeed, according to their doctrine, Christ bears no office, wears no title, and sustains no relation but what presupposes sin.

The atonement of the Son of God is the greatest proof that can be given of the existence of moral evil in our world. As the institution of a hospital in a neighborhood is a proof of the prevalence of disease and sickness there, so the provision of salvation denotes the existence of a moral disorder. And as the demanding, or the receiving of a satisfaction by any man supposes a wrong committed or sustained, so the astounding fact that Jesus Christ offered himself up to God, as a "propitiation," is a public and clear proof of the existence of moral evil and wrong.

One of the designs of the institution of typical sacrifices was to bear universal and an uninterrupted testimony to the actual existence of moral wrong in the world. They brought sin into remembrance every year, and their vicarious provisions supplied the first clue, to that scheme of substitution by which the evils of sin should be taken away by the Lamb of God. The

visible inflictions of awful judgments on guilty heads were, "far between," and in the interval, the rebels might think their crimes had ceased to be wrong, or God had become tired of the contest. Therefore sacrificial victims were instituted by God, and their crimson tide flowed through all the hamlets of the human race, a stream of evidence that sin existed. The flood of the atonement takes up this testimony and demonstrates, that if One died for all, then were all dead in trespasses and in sins.

God sets forth, also, the atonement of his Son as a demonstration of the tremendous evil, and horrible wickedness, malignity and turpitude of sin. Perhaps there is no greater proof of the stunning influence of sin, on an intellectual being, than the dreadful fact, that there are millions of intelligences who have no conception how sin can be injurious, or offensive, to a Governor of such glory and benignity as God is represented to be. If God is not susceptible of *physical* injury, they cannot understand how He is capable of *moral* injury. This is, as if they could understand that a king might be injured by corporal ill-usage, but do not know how a king can be injured in his feelings, character, and honor. God always speaks of sin as what he abominates, and to condemn sin was one purpose of giving his Son to the death of the cross. The withholding of his just rights from a Being of infinite excellence; the refusal of the esteem, homage and obedience which he deserves and demands; and the contemptuous insults offered to him in the Atheism, idolatry, blasphemy, and perjury of mankind, must be wrongs and injuries of infinite magnitude, and of unutterable malignity.

1. When a wise ruler is offended, he will not precipitately make the offenders feel the immediate effects of a hasty wrath. The benignity of his nature will make him ready to forgive; but it will suit neither his character, nor his honor, to forgive in such a manner as to leave an impression that the offence was petty and trivial. To avoid this he would call in a third party—of a rank and

dignity corresponding with those of the offended. If, for the purpose of mediating between the parties, this umpire undergoes great trouble, and cost, and pain, the arrangement will be more calculated to make on the offenders, vivid impressions of the heinousness of the offence in the estimation of the offended. We discover in every-day life that an offender feels that his offence is not lightly regarded when a third party is called to interpose—and that this feeling will be enhanced in proportion to the dignity of the interposer, and to the trouble which he takes in the affair.

God has adopted this method to impress us duly with a sense of the evil of sin. He has called in the mediation of a third Party—that party is a Person of great dignity and worth, yet his mediation costs him unparalleled sorrows, degradations, and sufferings, which he voluntarily and cheerfully endures for the sake of the offenders. It is farther revealed that even this Daysman is selected to mediate, on account of his well known abhorrence of the offence. "Thou hast loved righteousness and *hated* iniquity, *therefore* God, even thy God hath anointed thee." Heb. i, 9. Every thing, therefore, in the provision of One to mediate this affair tends to give enlarged views of the greatness of the wrong.

2. The atonement shews the evil of sin by manifesting the amiable character of the moral governor against whom men have revolted. Sometimes the tyrannical character and the oppressive laws of a king justify an opposition to his government. These excuses cannot be advanced to vindicate the rebellion of the world against God. God is LOVE. Even the law which he gave was the law of love and liberty. His forbearance and long-suffering towards the offenders who insult him, show Him to be a Being of infinite benignity and supreme excellence. The provision of an expedient, to offer even deliverance and pardon to them with honor to his character, is "a far more exceeding" evidence of the transcendent Amiableness, and Goodness, and Worthiness of Him, against whom men has rebelled.

It was calculated to awaken every offender to exclaim, "Herein is LOVE!—not that we loved God, but that HE loved us, and gave His SON to be a propitiation for our sins. What could have maddened us to rebel against a God of such boundless love and clemency!"

Sin was made to appear more exceeding sinful by the contrast which the dignity of the Mediator suggested between the offence and the Majesty of the Great and Blessed God. The mediating Daysman was none other than "God manifested in the flesh." The offence must be heinous to require a mediator of such grandeur. Then how desolating and ruinous must a state of things be, that requires such a Mediator to become a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief! In such a mediation the offenders can see nothing to extenuate their blame-worthiness—but every thing to enhance it. The great sufferings of the Mediator were intended to be an expression of the awful effects of sin, and of its being so abhorrent to God, that he proclaimed it "condemned," by the death of his own Son. The whole arrangements of the atonement exhibit sinning against such infinite excellence as a crime unutterably vile and the rebellion that challenges omnipotent abhorrence as infinitely contemptible and eternally ruinous.

3. The life and character of the atoning Mediator showed the loveliness, the justice, and the goodness of the law which offenders had violated and trampled. It was an honor to the moral law to have been obeyed by such a Personage. In proportion as his obedience magnified the law and made it honorable, it condemned the transgression and the transgressors of it. The life of Jesus Christ teaches us that the law is adapted to our circumstances and faculties, that it is possible to observe and keep it, and that it deserves the affection and obedience of all men. The Mediator was "higher than the heavens," in supreme dominion, omnipotent power, and exalted station, yet he regarded this law as worthy of all the respect and honor with which he could

invest it by his obedience. If any might think themselves above it, he more. Yet he yielded to it an obedience which the whole divine government contemplate with ineffable approbation and complacency. The life and the character of the Mediator, clearly showed to mankind, that this law was not unreasonable in its demands. It required no impossibilities. Jesus Christ could not obey it, but with the same faculties that we possess; and we are not destitute of a single power or faculty with which Christ obeyed the law. His were mental powers and intellectual faculties in which he grew and made advances; and in every state of his progress as a child, a youth, and a man, he honored and kept the law.

It was an honor to the law to be exhibited as sufficiently good, and free, and broad, to be the rule for the mediatorial life of the Son of God. As God and Man he was a Personage new to the universe. The life of such a personage, in a course of transactions between God and man, would be unexampled and eminently extraordinary. The law which he recommended to the esteem of mankind, he took for the rule of his own life. He was made of a woman, and made under the law, the very law on which men had trampled. He showed by his obedience to it, what kind of life the law required from man. He obeyed to the highest perfection all its perfect commands. In the entire course of his life, he kept his eye fixed on this rule. In him was found no sin; he was completely perfect; yet He was not more perfect than this law required him to be! O how amiable and lovely must that law be, that was a sufficient pattern for the transcendant loveliness of the mediatorial character of the Son of God! When the highest being in the universe took upon him the form of a servant and entered upon a course of obedience, and suffering, and glory, he observed this law in all his stupendous transactions with the divine government, and in all his merciful dispensations towards rebellious man. In all his undertaking he established the law. By his

obedience he gave a demonstration to the universe, that he did not wish to save sinners, by breaking through the laws and principles of moral government, but by honoring and establishing them, as the immutable and indestructable elements of the divine empire.

4. An impression of the evil of sin is calculated to be made by the atonement, by its showing at what infinite expense God has been to oppose its progress. The magnitude and strength of an embankment are solid proofs of the power of the tide which they are intended to check. And the length and breadth, and the height and depth of the atonement, bespeak the wide extent of evil against which it was raised. Sin is evil alone, unmixed with any good. It is every way evil. Examine it on every side, and the more it is explored, the more evil it appears. God has provided various means to oppose and prevent its progress, but the atonement of his Son is the greatest and the noblest of them all. The history of Christianity shows that nothing is so calculated to check and destroy sin as a full and faithful exhibition of the cross of Christ.

Had it not been for the atonement the ravages of sin would have gone on in an interminable progression of wide-spread and cumulative evils. Sin would have become the pilot of wrecks without a shore to strand on,—the Polyphemus of a valley of dry bones,—the real Upas of the universe. Through the atonement millions of the tossed and shattered barks of Eden, can now throw an anchor to a rock of strong consolation; the Spirit of peace takes the place of the devouring usurper, and breathes life, and health, and joy over all the plain; and the tree of life stretches forth its branches, bearing leaves for the healing of the nations.

The human mind finds it almost impossible to follow out the endless workings of an evil principle, or to take in a Universe of horror. There is one fact that may assist our conception of this terrible subject. It is the incursions and ravages of sin *notwithstanding* the provision of an atonement. Sin, after all awfully prevails.

Few transgressors come to hate sin, and love the government. Of those who do come, none come of their own accord; they are all drawn by the exercise of sovereign influences. Some presume that God is so exclusively merciful, that he will never execute the penalty which he has threatened. Others fancy that the atonement has made a kind of commercial payment and satisfaction for their sins, and that they are no longer responsible for them. They are warned, and exhorted, invited and urged to forsake sin; nevertheless they sin with a high hand, laugh at every remonstrance, ruin their own souls, desolate the creation, and assail every perfection in the Godhead.

Against all this God has reasoned with mankind, by the public sufferings of his own Son. He asks them, "If these things be done in the green tree, what will be done in the dry?" "How shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation?" For such provisions and remonstrances to be despised, and despised by such a creature as man, seems to merit the most marked infliction of his displeasure. Had it been possible for another god to invade and injure his government, it would have been an aggression to be expected from a peer in infinity; but to be openly insulted by a worm of the earth—to have "the rod and the staff" of his own tender mercies converted into spears to assault himself—to have the dreadful denunciations of his law, and the gracious invitations of his gospel, to be treated as sounding brass, or tinkling cymbal, must be the acme of wrong. It is the higher of the highest towerings of wickedness, around which the thickest and the heaviest clouds of vengeance would gather, and "rain down snares and fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest."

SECTION II.

The Atonement, an expedient instituted instead of the Punishment of Sin.

In the chapter on the atonement in its relation to the divine moral government, I promised to take up the subject of this section. We have already seen that threatnings are indispensably necessary to the administration of moral government—that distributive justice requires the literal execution of these threatenings, but that public justice can suspend their execution, if some expedient can be found that will as fully answer the ends of government. We have also seen that the scriptures represent the atonement of Christ as such an expedient substituted instead of the infliction of the threatened penalty. I will now proceed to illustrate this.

I. The Lord Jesus Christ suffered as if he had been a sinner.

The sufferings of Christ were perfectly novel to the universe—a new phenomenon in the moral constitution. They posed and amazed all angelic Intelligences. The annals of moral government supplied no precedent of suffering, but in connection with sin. Angels had witnessed sufferings before, but never unconnected with sin. The sufferings of the Holy One of God was, therefore, to them, a problem which they could not solve, and into which they desired further to look.

Jesus Christ suffered as one condemned of men. He was numbered among the transgressors. He suffered from man as if he had been an offender and a criminal. He was charged with crimes of a high and offensive enormity. He was publicly arraigned as a blasphemer of God, a subverter of religion, a seducer of the people, a rebel against Cæsar, a vile impostor, a notorious malefactor. His merciless persecutors said to Pilate, "If he were not a malefactor, we would not

have delivered him up unto thee," John xviii, 36. In this character, and under this ignominy he died, by the hand of legal authority, the death of a condemned criminal.

The most amazing circumstance connected with his death was, that he suffered as one disowned, reprobated, and "forsaken of God." He was despised and rejected of men. At the same time, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." God "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." He delivered him up for us all, to be treated as a sin-offering—as a sin-expiator—a lustration for the world. He became a curse for us; exposed to reviling, and scorn, and malediction; devoted and accursed, anathematized to reproach and shame, as one infamous and execrable, deserted and rejected of God. O! how great is the mystery of revealed godliness.

Sufferings are incident to sinners only. How then did the holy Son of God come into contact with suffering?—Did he ever sin? No—he was holy, undefiled and separate from sinners. On what principle, then, can the sufferings of Christ be in harmony with God's eternal justice in moral government, and with his ineffable love to his own beloved Son? There is but one principle revealed that will reconcile them, and that is the principle of substitution—the substitution of vicarious sufferings. In this arrangement the sufferings of "the Just," are substituted instead of the sufferings due to "the unjust;"—"the Just" is treated *as if* he had been "the unjust;"—the Son of God suffered as if he had been a transgressor. Christ did not suffer as a transgressor, but *as if* he were a transgressor. Cain suffers, not *as if* he were a transgressor, but *as* a transgressor. Christ suffered not as a transgressor, but as if he were one. He was wounded for *our* transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. He is often said to have suffered for sin, that is, as if he had been a sinner.

The doctrine of the New Testament concerning the vicariousness of the sufferings of Christ is summed up in 2 Cor. v, 21. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God through him." The advocates of a limited substitution of Christ for the persons of the elect, often represent Christ as bearing, not the effects of sin, but actually the very *guilt* of sin. This arises from a misunderstanding, and a consequent misapplication of the term guilt. The term *guilt* has various meanings. It sometimes means, consciousness of having done wrong. It means also, desert of punishment, arising from a consciousness of crime. Sometimes the term, guilt, is used for liableness to punishment, independent of consciousness of crime.

The Schoolmen had three different designations for these various applications of the term *guilt*. The consciousness of having done wrong, they called, *reatus culpæ*. The deserving of punishment, they called, *dignitas pœnæ* or, *meritum pœnæ*. The liableness to punishment or sufferings independently of having done wrong, they called, *reatus pœnæ*. The person in any of these circumstances, they called, *reus*. When Joseph's brethren thought themselves verily *guilty* about their brother, they considered themselves as *rei culpæ*, conscious of crime, and *meriti pœnæ*, deserving of punishment. The children who suffered in the destruction of Sodom, and in the gainsaying of Corah, were *rei pœnæ*, liable to the punishment, though no one could regard them, as either *rei culpæ*, conscious of crime, or *meriti pœnæ*, deserving of punishment. This was precisely the case of the scape-goat. He was neither reus culpæ, nor meritius pœnæ, but he was treated as "reatus pœnæ."

This I concieve to be the meaning of the above text. In the language of the Schools, I would read it thus. "He hath made him to be reatum pœnæ for us, who knew no reatum culpæ, that we might be non rei pœnæ through him." Or, in plain English, let it be para-

phrased thus. "He made him to be liable to punishment for us, who was not conscious of having done wrong, that we might be not liable to punishment through him."

The principles of commercial redemption, and of personal commutation between Christ and the elect, would require the text to be translated thus. "He hath made him to be "meritum pœnæ" for us, who was not "reus culpæ," that we might be "non meriti pœnæ" through him." Indeed, Dr. CRISP, CHAUNCEY, and the author of "GETHSEMANE" have argued, as if the words were to be translated thus, "He hath made him to be reatum culpæ for us, who was not reatus culpæ, that we might be non rei culpæ through him:" that is, He made him to be guilty of our crimes, who was not guilty of crimes, that we might be made not guilty of crime through him.

The translations of these ultra-Calvinists, take for granted, utter and perfect impossibilities. It is no dishonor to God to say that He cannot unmake a transpired event, that He cannot annihilate *a fact*, that he cannot transfer moral identity. It is utterly impossible to unmake the facts that we are "rei culpæ" and "meriti pœnæ," guilty of wrong, and deserving of punishment. It is, however, possible, to make us not "rei pœnæ," liable to punishment, by a measure which will, in public justice, answer the same ends as our punishment. On the other hand, it is perfectly impossible to make the Lamb that was without blemish, to be reatus culpæ, or meritus pœnæ, guilty of wrong, or deserving of punishment; when it is a transpired fact, that he was "without sin." Yet his sufferings are altogether inexplicable except on the principle that he was by a divine institution treated as if he were, like the innocent scape goat, "reus pœnæ," liable to punishment for us. This arrangement could never unmake the fact, that we were guilty of wrong, and deserving of punishment. Nor can our being treated as "non reati pœnæ," not liable to punish-

ment for Christ's sake, unmake the fact that "he knew no sin."

Had he been a sinful man, or even of a peccable constitution, there would have been nothing mysterious in his sufferings. But being an innocent member of the divine government, no principle in the moral administration, but the principle of substitution,* will account for his enduring such sufferings.

Unless the sufferings of Christ were vicarious and expiatory, we cannot account for the demeanor of the blessed Redeemer under them. If there be nothing peculiar in the nature and design of Christ's sufferings, there is something unaccountably peculiar in his spirit and temper under them. Before "the hour" of atonement, his character was established for an undaunted firmness, that never shrunk from danger and suffering. But now, when "His hour is come," he shrinks with unutterable distress and anguish from the cup of sufferings. Many men of tender frames, and many too of the more timid sex, have "endured the cross," not only with unflinching fortitude, but also with triumphant bravery. These were sinners, and many of them destitute of religious supports; yet they met their agonies with well-sustained calmness. Here, however, is One suffering, as some say, to give us an example how to

*To meet the common objection, that it is impossible that one should suffer for another, I quote the following passage, from 'TRUMAN's Great Propitiation,' a work, every leaf of which is worth the weight of the book in gold.

"God's ways are above our understandings. Shall we say, that is impossible which he said he *hath done*, because we cannot understand it?

"It is notoriously possible. God's forbidding men to punish one for another, argueth the thing possible. He would not forbid impossible things. The heathen knew it very possible, we may see, by their offering up the fruit of their body, for the sin of their soul.

"It is highly possible that it hath been, and is common amongst men. How common is the translation of punishment from one to another; as in hostages, and men undertaking to bring out the offender, liable to the mulct of the offender; which takes it for granted as a common thing.

"The Papists who scoff at justification by Christ's righteousness and satisfaction as absurd and impossible,—grant it eminently possible, by their proclaiming a justification by the merit and sufferings of saints. St. Francis's wounds' and Becket's blood, yea, the Virgin's milk will justify men—and yet some of them make little or nothing of Christ's death."—p. 72—74.

bear pain, and also to confirm the doctrines which he asserted to be true. He is strong in his personal innocence, strong in the love of his Father, and strong in the hope set before him, yet he shrinks from the cup of sorrows, and his bitter cries and tears testify the tremendous tempest that agitated his holy mind, and the inward horror and dismay that racked his heart and soul. The delicate sensitiveness of his holy frame, the pure innocence of his mind, and the high dignity of his person, must have made contact with such sufferings infinitely painful to him. He was *set forth* as a lustration, as a propitiation for the sins of the world, as a scapegoat led to a wilderness of reproach and suffering. God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. He died numbered among transgressors.

II. Jesus Christ endured his sufferings instead of the sufferings due to the sinner.

In the atonement there is not a substitution of persons only, but also a substitution of sufferings. The Lord Jesus made atonement, not by enduring the sufferings due to us in the curse of the law, but by sustaining other sufferings which had been laid on him by "a commandment received from the Father." I mean to say, that the penal sufferings due to man were suspended by this measure, and another class of sufferings substituted instead of them. Jesus Christ did not suffer the infliction of the *idem* in the penalty threatened, but the *tantundem*, the equivalent to that infliction, what would answer the same ends as the literal infliction. I submit the following reasons as proof that our penalty was not inflicted upon Christ:—

1. The sufferings of Christ were, both in nature and kind, different from the sufferings due to sinners. The sufferings due to a sinner consist of a painful consciousness of having done wrong—a sense of having offended God—bitter self-reproach for having broken the law of love—and the stormy horrors of a guilty and condemning conscience. In all the various and dreadful forms of Christ's sufferings, there was nothing like this. His

conscience never had a sting. He never felt the hell of self-remorse. He was encompassed with sufferings, as an island in an ocean of anguish, but the waves which dashed and foamed around him, found nothing in him to crumble and destroy.

2. The quantity and the degree of the sufferings of Christ were different from the sufferings due to the sinner. The scriptures never speculate on the intensity of the sufferings of the Adorable Jesus—they merely reveal his sufferings as being a sufficient atonement for sin. The sufferings of Christ were, no doubt, of indescribable intensity, but they had not the same elements of intensity with the torments of perished sinners. The sufferings of lost souls are intense, from a keen sense of the unreasonableness and unjustifiableness of their offence, and from the utter and eternal hopelessness of any relief, extenuation, or diminution of their pain. And these awful sufferings extend to a multitude which no man can number, and, accordingly, would form a dreadful amount of misery. The sufferings of Christ were, after all, the sufferings of ONE human nature, of *one* of the seed of Abraham. And amid these sufferings, "the glory that should follow" sparkled through the dark tempest of Calvary, and "the joy that was set before him" garnished the margin of his sepulchre. His sufferings were not a punishment. His consciousness of personal rectitude, and his confidence in his Father never forsook him. In the darkest hour of his anguish, his assurance of God's approbation and acceptance was in the highest exercise; "Father," he said, "unto thy hands I commend my spirit." Such elements as these are never found in the curses executed on sinners—nothing can unsting the worm that dieth not, or calm the surges of the lake that burneth for ever and ever.

3. If Christ endured the identical sufferings due to the sinner, His sufferings would not be a satisfaction or an atonement for sin, but a literal execution of the penalty of the law.

If a man give a tooth for a tooth, or an eye for an eye, he gives literally the penalty which the law demanded. If such a payment be called an atonement it is called so improperly, and in a lower sense. If he give something instead of an eye, say money, or land, or any thing else, of equal consideration with the injured person, or the injured government, he would make an atonement, a satisfaction. An atonement is a measure or an expedient that is a satisfaction for the *suspension* of the threatened penalty. A suspension or a non-execution of the literal threatening is always implied in an atonement. If Christ then endured the real suffering due to the sinner, his sufferings are not of the nature of an atonement, but are a literal infliction of the penalty threatened by the law.

A passage in the Epistle to the Galatians is frequently quoted to prove that the literal curse of the law was inflicted on the person of Christ. I will transcribe the whole passage that it may be under the reader's eye. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the *curse;* for it is written, *Cursed* is every one that continueth not in all the things which are written in the book of the law to do them. Christ hath redeemed us from the *curse* of the law, being made a *curse* for us: for it is written, *Cursed* is every one that hangeth on a tree." Gal. iii, 10, 13.

This language of the apostle has been supposed to settle the question that Christ endured the *idem*, the identical punishment due to the sinner. Before you come to the same conclusion, steep these three thoughts in your mind.

1. How were sinners *accursed*? By being denounced as transgressors of the law. They are *accursed*, FOR not continuing in all the things which are written in the law to do them. No one will say that Christ was *accursed* in this sense.

2. How was Christ *accursed*? By being hanged on a tree. He was made a curse by being exposed to reproach and shame on a cross. The reason why

Christ is called a curse, is—not, FOR cursed is every one that continueth not in the law, but—FOR cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. No one will say that the curse threatened on the sinner was hanging on a tree.

3. Did the moral law ever *curse* Christ? Let not this question be thought too startling. The meaning is, Did the law ever denounce Christ a transgressor? He kept the whole law, in every point. He magnified the law, and made it honorable. It is therefore impossible that Christ could have been accursed by the law.

To be made a curse, or to suffer a curse, is to be made and exhibited an expression of displeasure and scorn. The sinner suffers the curse of the law when he is made an expression of its opposition and malediction against transgression. The blessed Son of God condescended to be made such an expression when he was "*set forth*" to declare the righteousness of God" against sin. This he became not by being denounced as an offender, but by being delivered up to public scorn, malediction, and ignominy. This passage, then, so far from proving that Christ suffered the *idem* in the penalty, proves the contrary. And when Christ is said to have suffered "the chastisement of our peace," I believe the meaning to be, that the sufferings of Christ were substituted instead of inflicting the chastisement due to us, and are called by this name, because they answered the same ends as if our chastisement had been literally inflicted upon us.

4. Every sinner is liable to the penalty of the law until he believe in Christ.

If Christ endured the literal punishment, the identical curse due to any man, or to all men, *they* are no longer liable to it. Upon no principle of Justice, or of Truth, are they liable to a punishment which has been literally inflicted on another in their stead. If this punishment was literally inflicted on Christ, it can never be executed again, and it never can be threatened again. Look for a moment on the bearings of such an hypothesis as this. On the supposition that Christ

died for all men, all men are perfectly free—the curse of the law can never be inflicted on them, *and* on their substitute. Then it is a cunningly devised fable that there is, "wrath to *come*."

On the supposition that Christ died only for the elect, then, they are free from punishment since the hour in which Christ sustained their penalty,—they were never born the children of wrath even as others for it had been exhausted on the cross,—they were never converted by the terrors of the Lord, for these terrors could not have been true concerning them. Yea, they have never passed from death unto life, for they never *were* under death, as Christ had long ago died the death that was supposed to have been due unto them. This very hypothesis is the ground-work of the Babel structure of "eternal justification." If the elect were justified from eternity, will any supralapsarian Calvinists be pleased to tell us, at what period were the elect in a state of condemnation, and if they were never in a state of condemnation from what could they be justified?

5. Even Believers in the atonement are not exempt from sufferings in this world.

If the Lord Jesus endured all the identical sufferings due to his people, how come they to suffer such tribulations and inflictions here. Though these sufferings may be regarded as the chastisements of a Father, they are intended to embitter sin, and they can embitter sin only by expressing how repugnant and displeasing it is to a holy God and Father. If the displeasure of God due to the sins of his people was vicariously suffered by Jesus Christ, it is difficult to account how other expressions of his displeasure have been reserved for the elect themselves. The agonies of self-condemnation and remorse, the anguish of repentance, and the distress of contrition are, certainly, elements of the curse of the law. Did Christ suffer, that the elect might not suffer these things? Thousands of people dear to God have, in their own persons, sustained the

waves and the billows of these painful emotions, which demonstrates that they had not been vicariously sustained before.

6. If Christ paid the identical penalty due in law, then, by the atonement there has been no remission, no forgiveness.

This hypothesis supposes that God has *remitted* nothing. He has forgiven nothing, for every jot and tittle of the punishment due from us has been *exacted* of our Substitute, and has been fully and perfectly discharged by him. Then, what has God *remitted?* On this system, he does not forego a single particle of suffering threatened in the penalty, but inflicts every iota of it; he remits only when the utmost farthing is paid. If a man be sentenced to the stocks, and another suffer the stocks for him, it would be absurd to say that the sentence was remitted.

This absurdity proceeds from viewing the remission of sin, as the forgiveness of a commercial debt. Such commercial views of redemption are justified by some from scriptural declarations, such as the parable of the two debtors, the prayer, "forgive us our debts," &c. On this it is enough to say, *first*, that these are only commercial figures employed to express a moral transaction, and as such cannot give the whole view of the case; *secondly*, that in the cases supposed, the "*debt*" actually forgiven, is the liableness to punishment for neglect of duty.

When we say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,"—we do not mean that we release all men from all obligation to love us, but merely from liableness to our displeasure for having wronged us. So when we say to God, "forgive us our debts," we do not mean to pray, that he would release us from the obligation to obey him, but from liableness to punishment for having disobeyed him.

Then, when God is said to forgive *sin*, sin is considered a debt, not in the sense of obligation to *duty*, but in the sense of liableness to *punishment*. On the

supposition that God has actually inflicted this identical punishment on the substitute, it can never be said to have been remitted. To say that through the death of Christ the punishment is remitted as to us, is worse than saying nothing; for it seems to imply that it is a matter of indifference with God, *who* sustains the sufferings, provided he has them duly inflicted. Of all absurdities, this is the most revolting.

Sin, when it is said to be forgiven, is considered as an indictment against us, as a bond binding us to punishment. Sin, in the sense of a transgression of the law, can never be properly called a "debt." This, from the nature of the case, would be sheer absurdity. No one will say that we *owe* sin to God. It were the same as to say that the transgression of his law is what is *due* from us to him. Sin then as an indictment against men, renders all men liable to punishment, to the curse of the law, to the displeasure of God. Think, then, of the dreadful amount of misery due to the elect for sin. Is all this misery really to be inflicted? It matters not whether the aggregate fall on one hundred, or on one,—is the amount really to be inflicted? I think the answer of the Gospel is this. The infliction of this penalty is suspended as to all, during a state of probation, for the sake of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. To those who accept the atonement of Christ as a sufficient demonstration of the evil of sin, this penalty is entirely remitted and forgiven; but on those who reject the sufferings of Christ in the character of an atonement for sin, the suspended penalty shall be inflicted, because they believed not in the only begotten Son of God.

7. If Christ suffered the identical penalty threatened, the remission of the penalty is not an exercise of grace and mercy in God, but an act of mere equity.

If a commercial creditor is paid the sum due to him from a debtor, the debtor's release is not a matter of grace, but of justice. If the volunteer death of a friend, instead of a condemned malefactor, be allowed

to take place, the deliverance of the malefactor is not a matter of favor and grace, but of debt and justice. And if Jesus Christ paid our identical penalty, no one will ascribe his redemption from punishment to favor and grace, when every jot of the punishment has already been fully and literally paid.

The pardon of this hypothesis is a pardon given after every demand has been exacted to the utmost. Is this the pardon of plenteous mercy, the forgiveness according to the exceeding riches of grace? The mercy and grace of the Redeemer indeed appear glorious in this pardon, but the mercy and grace of the Father and moral governor are totally eclipsed. The advocates of this system say that His grace and mercy appear in providing and accepting a ransom. Even this is only like the mercy of Dionysius the tyrant in the affair of Damon and Pythias, which allowed a substitution of person, but not a substitution of sufferings, a mercy which no one could admire, because it was a mercy that remitted nothing.

Besides, this view of the case supposes that the atonement is some kind of *inducement* to God to be gracious and merciful. The language of many theological writers of the high school, seems to imply that the atonement was a kind of re-imbursement to God of his lost honor, and even, a premium for the exercise of mercy. If the atonement were the motive for mercy, what motive, first of all, suggested the atonement itself? If God has been refunded for pardoning, and paid for mercy, the praise of the glory of his GRACE is hushed in eternal silence.

These seven arguments are the grounds of my persuasion that Christ did not suffer the identical penalty due to sinners, and that the sufferings which he endured in making atonement, were substituted instead of inflicting on him the literal threatening. I allow that the death of Christ may be alluded to in the New Testament as the act of a generous friend dying instead of another. This, however, is but one class of images

employed to represent the unparalleled wonders of this great subject, and could never be intended to mark out the entire outlines of this infinite transaction.*

III. Sinners are treated by the blessed God on account of the sufferings of Christ as if they themselves had suffered.

If a person sentenced to imprisonment be admitted to pay a fine, the result is to him as if he had suffered the imprisonment. If a colony of slaves are ransomed by a munificent friend, they are treated as if they had been at the cost themselves. If a band of rebels are spared for the sake of the worthiness of the king's son, they are treated as if that worthiness were their own. On the same principle, if a sinner be pardoned at the intercession of an Advocate with God, the result to the sinner is as if he had interceded himself. The Son of God was treated as if he were unworthy and unjust on our account, and we are treated as if we were worthy and just on his account.

This moral transfer of the benefits of Christ's mediatorial worthiness takes place according to a settled arrangement in God's moral government. An inquiry into the *modus* of his arrangement is idle and unprofitable. This arrangement is observed and acted upon every day in the providence of common life. I will suppose a case. An utter stranger of mean exterior knocks at your door, and wishes a share in the hospitalities of your house. You know nothing of him, you are surprised at his request, and dismiss him, perhaps, unceremoniously. He knocks again, makes use of the name of your son, or brother, or some intimate friend—declares that he calls at his request, proves that he is on intimate terms with him, and received assurances from him that if he knocked at your door, and make use of

* On this subject, see 'Four Discourses on the Atonement,' by D. Beman, of America. This little work is a rich nursery of what Lord Bacon calls, "The Seed of Things." It abounds in living theological principles, each of which, if duly cultivated and reared, would unfold great and ample truths, illustrative of this great doctrine.

his name, you would shew him every kindness and hospitality. Your conduct toward the stranger is now very different. In him there is no difference, except that he has made use of another's name. But why should you act differently towards him on that account? The reason is that you promptly and spontaneously obey a certain arrangement of providence, and you impute to the stranger a portion of the character or worthiness and respectability of the person whose name he has used, that is, you treat him better on account of that name. In such a case you never think that there is an actual transfer and commutation of personal worthiness, nor do you stay to inquire *how* you come to treat the stranger better for making use of your friend's name. Let the first application of the stranger in his own name and character stand for a sinner's approach to God on the ground of his own righteousness. God says, "Depart, I know you not." He knocks a second time, and makes use of the worthy name of the Son of God, and begs to be admitted into God's favor for the sake of Jesus Christ. He is then cordially "accepted in the Beloved." He is found in Christ, and is well-received on account of Christ. We perceive no incongruity, but due propriety, in such a transaction in common providence, and we would see no absurdity, but wise benevolence, in such an arrangement in the mediation of Christ, if we were apt to "discern spiritual things."

On our part this communion of benefits with Christ, takes place by faith, trust, or confidence in him; or, to use the figure above, by using his name. If a sick man be restored to health through his faith and confidence in the science and skill of his physician, he enjoys the blessings of health as if he had had that science and skill himself. If a passenger cross in safety a tempestuous sea through his firm confidence in the knowledge and ability of his Pilot, the result is to him as if he had been at the helm himself. In the same manner, if a sinful man is delivered from his sin

through a firm belief and persuasion that the sufferings of Christ are an awful expression of the evil of sin, and supply an honorable ground for vindicating God's righteousness in pardoning him, the result is to that sinner, as if he had suffered to vindicate that righteousness himself.

The doctrine of the scriptures concerning substitution appears entirely free from the objections brought against the exhibitions of it in some theological systems. When I consider that Jesus Christ suffered *as if* he had been a sinner, that nevertheless, his sufferings did not partake of the elements of the literal curse of the law, and that in consequence of them sinners are treated as if they had suffered themselves, the doctrine of substitution appears in bold prominence, and appears to consist in a substitution of sufferings as well as in substitution of persons.

SECTION III.

The Atonement the appointed medium of Salvation from Sin.

1. THE scriptures represent the atonement of Christ as supplying an honorable ground for offering and for dispensing pardon to sinners.

I have defined an atonement to be, any provision, or expedient, that for the purposes of good government answers the same ends as the punishment of the sinner. An atonement is provided that, the ends of government being answered, the governor may be left at liberty to pardon offenders in what way, or on what terms he pleases. An atonement only provides that the governor *might* be just in pardoning, or that he *might* pardon, and his justice be unsullied; but not at all that he *must* pardon or be unjust. A pardon through an atonement is one honorably *admitted* by justice, but, most assuredly, not one *imperiously demanded*, as if it were the remission of a commercial debt.

It is in this sense that Jesus Christ is said to have given his life a ransom for all, 1 Tim. ii, 6. The death of Christ is the ransom price (the λυτρον) of our deliverance. The ransom price is a sum of money, or any other equivalent consideration that influences the holder of a captive to set him at liberty. It is in reference to this sense that we are said to be justified through the "redemption" that is in Christ Jesus—that is through the ransom-price, the valuable consideration of his death, which makes God just in justifying. The language is, of course, analogical, and must be so understood and explained. The meaning I believe to be this, that as the ransom price is the ground of the liberation of a captive, so is the atonement of Christ the ground and reason for delivering a sinner from liableness to punishment, and from the thraldom of sinful habits and passions.

2. The atonement of Christ is not only the *ground on account* of which pardon is proclaimed and offered, but it is the *medium through* which pardon is dispensed and conferred.

Christ is represented as "the way" to the Father. Redemption is described as being "through Christ." God meets the sinner for reconciliation "in Christ;" and the offender draws near to God "in the name of Christ." The atonement is not the salvation itself, but the medium of salvation; as the ransom-price is not the redemption of the captive, but the medium of his redemption. Therefore, the atonement, as such, does not secure the salvation of any, but is the medium of salvation to all. Just so is providence—it secures health to none, but is the medium of health to all.

The atonement was not designed to deliver at once and summarily offenders, simply as offenders. It never intended to acquit them of their offence irrespectively of their disposition towards the government. In the atonement, God consulted, not alone the sinner's good, but, pre-eminently *his own glory;* but an indiscriminate pardon dispensed without any regard to the disposition

of the sinner, would be inconsistent with the wisdom of the divine government, and with the public justice which, in this provision, sought the good of the whole commonwealth. To deliver captives, who despise their Deliverer and their deliverance cannot be wise; and to ransom criminals, only to make them lawless, cannot be good.

The atonement is a medium of redemption, and must be *employed* as such before redemption will ever be effected. God employs it as the medium of *declaring* his righteousness, and *expressing* his mercy in forgiving sin; and the sinner employs it as the medium of his access to God. The atonement will avail the sinner nothing unless it be used. It is a "remedy," but it must be taken; it is a "way," but it must be walked in; it is a "satisfaction for sin," but it must be pleaded at the throne of God; it is "the blood of the Lamb," but it must be sprinkled, before it will avail for our safety from destruction. Until this be done, "there is no salvation;" but the wrath of God abideth on every sinner. It is the amnesty of a government to an army of rebels, it may be as comprehensive as the whole army, but it will benefit only those who accept of it.

The New Testament never represents the atonement as the *procuring cause* of salvation, but the MEDIUM of dispensing it. Eternal love is the sole procuring *cause* of salvation *through* the atonement. Such a statement is supposed by some to derogate from the dignity of the atonement. Accordingly Mr. M'LEAN* argues thus: "To represent Christ's death merely as a *medium* through which spiritual blessings are conveyed, and not, the *meritorious procuring cause* of them, is to ascribe no more to it than to the preaching of the gospel, which is also a medium through which salvation is conveyed."

On the objection of this able and distinguished divine, I submit the following remarks.

* M'LEAN's Works, vol. 4, p. 226.

1. Here it is supposed that a *meritorious* and a *procuring* cause are the same. For an illustration of the difference between these two causes, take the case of Amyntas pleading for the relief of his brother Æschylus. The Athenians had condemned Æschylus to death, but his brother pleads for his pardon on account of the arm which he had lost in fighting the battle, and defending the honor of his country. In this instance the *procuring* cause of release was Amyntas's love and goodwill towards his brother, the *meritorious* cause was the loss of Amyntas's arm at the battle of Salamis. It would not be correct to say that the loss of Amyntas's arm *procured* his brother's release; for the loss of the arm, as such, procured nothing for him; but when viewed, as sustained in the cause of the government, and now made to bear on the case of Æschylus, it became the *meritorious* cause of his release.

2. If the atonement be the *procuring* cause of salvation, what is the *procuring* cause of the atonement itself? The procuring cause of the atonement must be the procuring cause of every other blessing. There can be no impropriety in saying that sovereign grace is the procuring *cause* of salvation, and the atonement the procuring *medium* of it.

3. What Mr. M'Lean says about the death of Christ being a medium, and the gospel being a medium, is only a play upon words. For instance. In the case of Æschylus, Amyntas was the medium *through* which the Athenian government *granted* the pardon; the document authoritatively expressing the pardon was the medium *by* which the government *conveyed* it. Thus the love of God is the procuring cause of salvation, the atonement is the meritorious cause; or, if you like, the procuring medium of it, and the gospel is the medium of *conveying* it. Even in commercial exchanges, money, is not the procuring cause of merchandize, it is only a procuring medium, and so is the atonement in moral government.

3. The death of Christ forms a ground of encouragement to the sinner to hope and to plead for remission of sins.

As a sinner, even on the ground of the atonement he can claim nothing. Christ did not die to *make* God just, nor did he die to *constrain* him to exercise justice, but that he *might* be just in justifying the ungodly. It does not become the sinner to demand pardon as a *claimant* but to crave it as a penitent *suppliant*. There is no instance in scripture of the sobs of penitence assuming the tone of demand.

"Sue out your right," is a phrase very common in religious parlance, and has been frequently used by "the olde Dyvines." If this phrase means, that a sinner should demand his salvation as a right due to him, it is an egregious error, it shocks every Christian grace, and horrifies all common sense. But if "to sue out" means to plead with all the earnestness of a humble suppliant, and with the firm resolution "if I perish I perish," then the phrase is good, and may be used, and used safely when the tears of penitence glisten in the sinner's eye.

For earnest entreaties and importunate pleadings at the throne of grace for pardon, the atonement affords a broad, firm, and free ground. To a sinner praying for free mercy for the sake of the atonement we can say, "Ask what thou wilt, thou canst not be too bold."

4. The death of Christ furnishes the believer in it with a safe foundation for peace of conscience, confidence towards God, and for every other blessing.

Hence, the death of the Son of God is represented as, sealing a testament, ratifying a compact, and confirming a charter. This charter says, "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus!" With this in the hand of faith, the Christian exclaims, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" "Who is he that condemneth?" "Who shall separate us from the love of God?" This gives him "the full assurance of hope." The conscience, which none but the God who had been

offended could hush, finds joy and peace in believing. The trembling sinner has his mind stayed upon a reconciled God, and says, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

He shews forth the Lord's death in all his duties, in all his conflicts, in all his fears, and in all his privileges and enjoyments. He shews it to God as the ground of his hope; he shews it to the accuser of the brethren as the ground of his justification; he shews it to the world as the medium of all his blessings, and he shews it to his own heart as the greatest motive to holiness and joy.

SECTION IV.

Particular Atonement inconsistent with the substitutionary sufferings of Christ.

The hypothesis that Jesus Christ endured the identical punishment due to the sinner, is one of the *substrata* of the doctrine of particular or personal atonement. It has been, I think, proved that this *substratum* is not of the formation of apostolical times, but the recent *alluvium* of modern systematic theology. Such a sandy deposit cannot, therefore, be a safe foundation for such a weighty doctrine.

1. The sufferings of Christ regard all the sins of mankind.

No passage of scripture can be adduced that limits the atonement to the sins of the elect. Whenever the death of Christ is mentioned in connection with sin, it is always with sin universally. The Lord laid on him the *iniquity* of us *all*. He is the Lamb of God that takes away the *sin* of the *world*. John, indeed, seems expressly to guard against every shadow of a supposition that Christ made atonement only for the sins of the elect. "He is the propitiation for *our* sins, and not for

ours ONLY, but for the sins of the whole world." When Paul says that God condemned sin in the flesh, he does not suppose that he condemned only the sins of the elect. He condemned every sin. By the death of Christ he branded the entire revolt of mankind with infamy and condemnation. "The blood of Christ cleanseth from *all sin*." This passage does not mean that it cleanseth all who are actually cleansed, but that it is the means to all of cleansing from all sin. Blood is not in the class of agents, or means, of cleansing in the sense of washing or cleaning the person, as by the application of water. "The "cleansing" therefore ascribed to the blood of Christ, is the cleansing of expiation, a cancelling of liableness to punishment. The passage, therefore, means, "the blood of Christ expiates from all sin." It will be immediately objected, "then why are not all men saved?" You perceive that this very objection goes on the principle that Christ did not expiate from all sin unless he endured the identical penalty due to all sin, which if it had been endured by him, *could not* again be inflicted on the sinner. It supposes that if Christ expiated all sins of all sinners, then should all sinners go free, as if expiation for sin were a commercial transaction. The objection "why are all men not saved" is not removed by reading "the blood of Christ *cleanseth*, instead of *expiates* from all sin." The scape-goat expiated all the sins of all the tribes, nevertheless many who would not repent and afflict their souls, were "cut off." Expiation is not the deliverance, it is only a medium of deliverance, and must be *used* for deliverance.

2. To expiate the crimes of a certain number of offenders by sustaining the identical punishment due to them is impracticable and absurd in a moral government.

Such an expiation is not an atonement, it is a literal infliction of the law as far as the penalty is concerned. It is true that where the punishment can be numerically portioned out, the penalties of a certain number of per-

sons might be borne. If seven men be sentenced to receive thirty-nine lashes each, a friend of strong frame might sustain the whole amount for them. If seven men were sentenced to the stocks for a day each, one might be found to bear this for them. But this would not be an atonement. It would be a literal infliction of the law—only on another person. The deliverance of the seven men would not be of grace and favor, but of justice—for the literal penalty due to them had been literally sustained by their friend.

The scriptures no where give us any such views of expiation and atonement. Did the lamb of the daily offering expiate sin by bearing the numerical amount of punishment for the day? Is the displeasure of God against sin a thing capable of being numbered and counted out? Is sin itself capable of being calculated in weight and number? The wrong which Ham did to Noah could not be numbered by items, nor was Noah's displeasure doled out by weight. Such a thing could not be made a matter of commercial measurement.

There is a theological phrase in very frequent use, but I think very few understand it. It is, that "the sufferings of a mere man cannot give satisfaction to the law." I suppose it is meant, that he cannot give satisfaction to the law and *survive* his sufferings. The law says, "Do this—or dying thou shalt die." If the man "do this," the law is satisfied. So if the disobedient *dies*, the law is satisfied, for it has received what it required of the disobedient. The law is perfectly satisfied as to its penal sanctions, in every sinner in the place of torments.

A thousand times has the necessity of the Mediator's being God, been founded on this proposition, that "no man could endure the curse of the law." This phrase, and others of the kind, always conveyed to my mind the idea, that this curse of the law was something like a dark cloud loaded with a stormy tempest, which, if made to pelt on any one, would require infinite physical

and muscular strength to sustain it. Then, Christ was able to bear this storm which would have destroyed the human race, merely because he was God. I appeal to all my readers, whether they have not had such thoughts about the death of Christ? My reader will find that he did not come by these thoughts from reading the scriptures: they can be traced to some excellent divine, to some popular preacher, or to some sweet singer of our Israel. All such imaginations proceed on the opinion, that Christ suffered or sustained every drop of the identical shower that was to have fallen on the elect. This argument can never be valid for the divinity of Christ, for were there no greater reason for Christ's being God, than that he might be able to bear under the storm, God, no doubt, could have imparted to an angel sufficient strength to sustain any infliction.

3. It is inconsistent with substitutionary atonement as MORAL MEANS, to be peculiarly designed for particular persons. In the arrangements of providence, every one will allow, that God designs the light of the sun as means to enable all men to do the duties of the day; and the man would not be deemed sane, who at sunset would argue, that God had not that design towards those who had turned out to be idle loungers and slothful servants, that he had really and truly, only designed it for those who had done their work. In like manner will men consent that God had designed the brazen serpent to cure all who were bitten in the wilderness; nor will any one reason, that it was specifically designed and purposed only for those who were actually healed. Men will not argue so perversely in such instances, because they have no theological system to maintain. Yet, because sinners perish by rejecting the atonement, men will persist in arguing, that it was actually designed for those alone who accept it.

4. The bearing of this principle of substitutionary sufferings on the principal controversies connected with the atonement, shows how opposed it is to particular redemption. If an ultra Calvinist can gain the point,

that Christ suffered the identical punishment threatened in the law, he has entrenched the doctrine of particular redemption within lines that are impregnable. For he will argue—thousands will suffer this punishment themselves, which could never again be inflicted, if the substitute had borne it for them. They themselves bear it,—*ergo*, He did not bear it. If the Arminian concede that Jesus Christ endured the identical curse of the law due to the sinner, he must with it give up the general call of the gospel, and the obligation of the sinner to accept salvation. If the wrath due for sin to all mankind has been endured by Jesus Christ, there is nothing in revealed theology that will vindicate the justice of inflicting it again. On this hypothesis it is undeniable, that if the wrath shall actually be inflicted on the culprit, no one else could ever have previously borne that wrath for him. All on the left hand of the Judge in the last day, will endure a wrath that was never inflicted on another *instead* of them. You can suppose that an Arminian brother had been calling on some of those very persons on the left hand to believe that Christ had already suffered the curse of the law for them—and *now* they cannot fail to perceive, either that that doctrine was not true, or that the second infliction is unjust.

An atonement consisting of substitutionary sufferings will be opposed both by the ultra Calvinist, and by the Socinian. The Socinian will oppose it because it silences all his objections against redemption through the merits of Christ. If he be not allowed for his weapons—the wrath of the God of love,—the transfer of moral character, the infliction of legal punishment on the innocent, his gauntlet can grasp no other. The doctrine of a substitutionary atonement, not only blunts, but breaks and shivers, these favorite and long-used lances of Socinianism. The ultra Calvinist will oppose this doctrine, because he thinks it will spring a mine under particular redemption. Though this principle will completely subvert the opinion of particular

redemption, I most confidently believe that it will not in the least affect the doctrine of personal election. Particular redemption and sovereign election are supposed to be *alter et idem*, because they regard the same persons; but the difference between them as measures in a moral government, is infinite. The doctrine of particular redemption, like the doctrine of "divine right" of despotism, is a figment; but sovereign election is like "particular providence," a FACT in the divine government, which no controversy can shake. Sovereign election is the exercise of the Governor's prerogative, but particular redemption divides the empire of God into a system of "*castes.*"

CHAPTER X.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE SALVATION OF THE HUMAN RACE.

SECTION I.

The Atonement rendering the Salvation of all Men possible.

If my reader has ever asked himself seriously, "*Can* a sinner like me be saved," or, "Is it *likely* that *I* shall be saved?" the matter of this section cannot fail to interest him. To such a reader I would answer in the words of Him who came to save—"The WORLD THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED." I hope my reader has considered what were the circumstances which rendered his salvation difficult and improbable. A sinner will never value the salvation of the gospel, till he perceives, and feels, and confesses the circumstances which made his salvation apparently impracticable and unattainable.

There are two great and awful obstacles in the way of saving any offender against the divine government. These are, the wicked enmity of his own heart against God, and the Honor of the divine law. These two obstacles will never be removed by man, for enmity will never change itself into allegiance, and repentance will never of itself restore and sustain the honor of the law. What, then, shall we do to be saved? The marvellous light of the gospel breaks in upon our bondage, and shows that these obstacles *can* be removed, and that "THE WORLD MIGHT be saved."

1. The obstacles to salvation on God's part have actually been removed by the atonement of Christ.

The obstacle in God's way was not the want of a disposition to save men, nor the literal claims of the penal sanctions of the law. The obstacle to salvation on his part was that which prevented Darius from saving Daniel, the want of an honorable medium for the *expression* of mercy consistently with the honors of the law. Darius after a long inquiry could not find such an expedient,—but our God looked into his own fold, and found there the Lamb of burnt-offering, his own Son, whom he sent forth as a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that He might be a "Just God and a Savior."

God did not remove this obstacle by an arbitrary exercise of omnipotent power, but by an apparatus of *means*, and this splendid apparatus of means is the atonement of his own Son. The atonement has removed the obstacles on God's part, because it has honored the law of God. This substituted expedient has the same effects on the community, as if the threatened penalty itself had been literally inflicted on all the transgressors; and all the perfections of God, which are, in other words, the principles of his government, are honored in being exercised and expressed *through the medium*, and *for the sake* of such an atonement.

If the moral Ruler himself had not provided such an expedient as the atonement, no sinner would ever have been saved. Man could never have invented such a measure; and had he invented it, he could never have supplied the costly and magnificent furniture of it, the sacrifice without spot or blemish, the satisfaction that the authority of the law should not be relaxed by saving criminals. If this point can be gained, the entire hindrance on God's part is fully removed, and it is now the message of the gospel to set forth, that this point has been gained, and that sinners can be honorably saved.

Since God has introduced such a measure as this into his government, all obstacles on his part are removed

fully and effectually, and that, whether any transgressor be saved or not. The salvation, or perdition of the sinner makes no difference whatever in the FACT of the clear removal of the obstacles out of the way. If any are saved, it is because the obstacles to their salvation have been taken out of the way. If any perish, it is not because these hindrances have been unremoved, but because they loved darkness rather than light.

God declares and proclaims himself able, willing, ready, and delighted to save. In this work he has a Sabbath in his love, and joys over sinners with singing, Zeph. iii, 17. He confirms by an oath, that he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, and that no one perishes because it is His pleasure. He asks men a reason for their perishing so perversely, and inquires, "Why will ye die?" He declares with all openness and sincerity, that "He willeth ALL men to be saved." He proclaims himself to all sinners as a God "in Christ reconciling the *world* to himself." He is awfully displeased and angry with those who will not receive the provisions of his gospel feast, and who neglect so great salvation. These things fully prove that now there is nothing, on God's part, to prevent any sinner from being saved.

II. Sovereign grace has provided MEANS to remove the obstacles to salvation on MAN'S part.

We have seen that one hindrance, the hindrance on God's part, has been perfectly taken away by the atonement that honored the law. There is another hindrance to the salvation of man, that is, an enmity of heart against the divine government, an unwillingness to be holy and good, an indisposition to be saved from sin.

Man wants a disposition to be saved. This disposition, like any other disposition, is to be acquired by the use of *means*, and God in his gospel has provided all necessary means for producing and fostering such a disposition. These means are the atonement of Christ, the ministry of his word, as a system of inducements, and the influences of the Holy Spirit.

The atonement of Christ has been the means of effectually removing the obstacles on God's part, and it is also the appointed means of removing the obstacles on the sinner's part. The atonement of Christ crucified will soften and melt the hard transgressor, that is, it is calculated to do so, as he looks to him, whom he has pierced. Such a view is calculated to break his heart into contrition and repentance, into a willingness and a disposition to be delivered from the sin which the atonement condemns. It will not necessarily and infallibly do this, but it is a means intended, and adapted to do so. The atonement is only a means to an end; and as means, to be effectual, it must be used and applied. You find five minutes' serious thoughts of the cross of Christ to produce in you holy thoughts, favorable dispositions. Suppose these thoughts to continue an hour, a day, &c., until they become habitual, these dispositions would become more strong and established. This would be removing the obstacle on your part to your own salvation; and the hints which I have suggested, shew that the atonement is calculated to do this. As the atonement is in the list of moral means, it secures nothing purely of itself. It is the balm of Gilead, but it will cure none without being applied and used. "The world through him *might* be saved." It is never the language of scripture, that since Christ died for his people, God *must* save them, or be unjust. No: notwithstanding the atonement, grace is *free* in saving man. "I am come," says Christ, "that ye *might* have life." He says, even to those who "will not come to him," ye *might* have life.

The ministry of the gospel as a system of motives and inducements is fitted to produce a cordial acquiescence in the great designs of the death of Christ. This gospel is for *every creature*. Its inducements are to be fully exhibited to all men. Faith comes by hearing it; and faith receives its testimony, and closes with its offers. The gospel, as the means, is the hammer to break the rock, the net to catch the souls of men, the

cords to draw sinners to God. The constant using of this ministry, and the continued keeping of the soul's eye on the exhibitions of the gospel, are calculated to bring man to cry, "What shall I do to be saved?" and to give him a disposition, a wish, to be free from sin.

The influences of the Holy Spirit form an indispensable link in the chain of these means. Without this, all the other links are of no effect. If this be snapped, the whole chain of salvation is broken. This link is as inseparable from the *agency of man* in believing, repenting, and obeying, as it is from the *agency of God* in working in you to will and to do. The influences of the Spirit are represented as being accessible to any and to all who ask for them; and men are even blamed for "not having the spirit." It is impossible to answer the question, "What shall I *do* to be saved?" without intimating that in his salvation the sinner must *do* something, must exercise his own agency. Let those who doubt this, *try* an answer. The sinner's salvation is represented as if it entirely depended on that doing, and yet the efficiency and success of that doing is never ascribed to his own agency. Do not startle at a mere phrase. Suppose I had said that, "a man must use his own agency in his own salvation; why should this alarm you. You surely do not believe that it is God himself that *believes* the gospel, that *repents* for sin, and that *sorrows* after a godly sort, when you believe and repent. In these things man is an agent, yet all that he does, does not procure or deserve his salvation. No. It is God that effects this. Let me try to make this plain to you. The success of the farmer is ascribed entirely to the blessing of God on his labors, yet it is felt and acknowledged as if it depended entirely on his own efforts. He toils and labors, fences and watches with much diligence and anxiety, yet he cannot point to one action, to which he can ascribe—the giving of life to the grain of corn. After all, the good man sings his "harvest home,"—"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory."

In the provisions of the gospel, then, we find an apparatus of means to remove out of the way of salvation, the obstacles on man's part. The very appointment of the means for such a purpose, shews that your salvation is a contemplated case, and that all men, the world, through Christ *might* be saved.

III. The right and successful USE of these means is not beyond the reach of man.

I wish it to be observed that I do not say that the removal of the obstacles is not beyond the reach of man, but that the using of the means to remove them is not beyond his reach. No man can make atonement for the sin of his soul; and the enmity of the human heart will never change itself, and thus remove the obstacles to salvation. But to *use the means* which God has appointed for removing them, is practicable to every hearer of the gospel. To quicken the seed in the earth is a work which the farmer cannot do, but to use the means of God's appointment for quickening it, is within the reach of every one. To remove the hindrances to salvation, is indeed above man's mere agency, but then in the use of means, the Spirit is promised, with all the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, according to the working of his mighty power.

God would never have established a train of means that would be inadequate to secure the desired end. The use of the atonement, the use of the gospel, the use of the supply of the Spirit, are surely able to save the soul. There has never been known an instance of their failure. It has never been known that any man made a faithful and serious trial of these means, and found his salvation an impracticable thing. Has my reader *tried*, and found it so? Give us *your* evidence. Have you *tried* to believe the testimony of the gospel, and found it impossible to believe it? Have you tried to love Christ, but found it a thing impracticable?

God would never command such use of means as would really be *impracticable*. No man can be justly bound by any law, human or divine, any farther than

his faculties and capacities reach. This is as self-evident as that there is a difference between right and wrong, liberty and oppression. If the use of the appointed means were impracticable, the sinner would be excusable, and his negligence could not be condemned.

Study the Lord Jesus Christ's fine and clear exposition of natural ability and moral impotency, in John v, 39—44; "Ye will not come to me that *ye might have* life. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." Here we may learn the following lessons: that the Jews had sufficient power to receive a Messiah or Deliverer of their own liking—that had they only exercised these very powers aright, they would have received Jesus Christ;—and that the only reason why they did *not* use these powers to receive Christ was, that they did not like him. "Ye *will* not come unto me."

In salvation, God deals with man as in the arrangements of common life, he deals with him as a reasonable creature, as an intelligent being, capable of understanding his own happiness. In medicine he only says to men, "you *might* be well." In science he only says, "you *might* be wise;" and in the seasons, "you *might* reap a harvest." And in the atonement he employs the same language, "the world *might* be saved."

IV. The gospel imperatively calls upon ALL MEN to use these means duly and effectually.

God, in the gospel calls upon all men to avail themselves of the provision of atonement, to believe the ministry of reconciliation, and to "ask" for the supply of the spirit. God solemnly warns men, and assures them that it is at their peril that they neglect or abuse these means of salvation. The call of the gospel is universal; it excludes none; it indiscriminately invites every one. The commission of its heralds is, "As many as ye find, bid unto the marriage." A minister of the gospel, with his commission in his hands, can never tell any sinners, that some of them can not be

saved, or that it is impossible to save them. No; this is the message to be proclaimed, "He is able to save to the uttermost, even the chief of sinners."

Hear the noble language of this vocation. "Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth." "Preach the gospel to every creature." "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." "Him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." Now God commandeth all men, every where, to repent." With these free and large invitations, can the hearers of the gospel doubt whether *they might* be saved? Can they think the gospel of truth a pious fraud? Will they blaspheme God by supposing HIM *insincere?* Perish such a thought in every heart; and let it be anathema in every theological creed.

The gospel invites all to Christ, because he tasted death for every man. A general call is founded on a general atonement. Such a noble message would not be founded on the ignorance of the messenger. His commission does not run—"Come, because, for aught I know, some of you may be elected to the feast, and therefore I invite you all." No; but, "come, FOR all things are ready, and yet there is room." Thus has he a more sure word, a more distinct testimony, worthy of all acceptation.

The tone of legislative authority is employed by the gospel when it summons all men to use the appointed means of saving their souls. It says, "Hear, and your souls shall live." The call of the gospel is a command to the sinner to comply with the provisions and designs of the atonement of Christ. It comes from the throne of God, invested with all the authority of that throne. All the authority of the divine government says, "Repent and believe the gospel," and, therefore, faith in the gospel is regarded as an act of homage to the throne of God; and unbelievers are condemned as those who, "*obeyed not* the gospel."

V. Sinners of every description, of every class, and of every grade of depravity, have been saved; and,

therefore, it is not the greatness of any man's sin that makes his salvation impracticable.

It is a grievous and lamentable fact that, notwithstanding the ample provisions of the atonement, many sinners are still perishing. Here is a matter for the serious and very painful inquiry, *why* and *how* do these sinners perish, while others have been actually and effectually saved? What obstacles remained in the way to prevent their salvation? We have seen that there were but two great obstacles in the way of saving transgressors—the honor of the government, on the side of God; and unwillingness to be holy, on the side of man. Were there *more* obstacles in the way of those who perish, than in the case of those who are saved? Was the atonement *insufficient* to *reach* the case of those who perish? Were they excluded from availing themselves of the benefits of the atonement? Were their sins too great to be pardoned? The gospel of the truth of the case answers all these questions with a decided negative. If the sins of those who perish were too enormous to be forgiven, then the atonement did not reach *their* case. If they are decretively excluded from all lot in the matter, then an obstacle on God's part still continues unremoved. Far is this from the God of mercy and truth. He solemnly proclaims and announces, that every obstacle on the part of his law is removed, entirely and for ever, by the substitutionary propitiation of his Son; and that consequently, he sincerely invites, and earnestly beseeches the offenders, to lay aside their enmity, and be reconciled to him by the blood of the cross.

Let any of my readers suppose themselves standing by the margin of the fiery gulph of woe, and asking the miserable spirits of wicked men, "Why were *you* lost, were *you* sinners *too great* to be saved?" The voices of a thousand awakened consciences would break on your ears—"No; sinners as great as we were, have been saved from this place of torment—we perished for no other reason than the neglect of so great salvation—we would not be gathered."

It is plainly declared in the Word of truth that the greatness of man's sins is no obstacle to his salvation, It was to a seed of evil doers that God said, "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as wool." In full harmony with this declaration is the language of the New Testament. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; he is able to save to the uttermost; he came to save sinners, even the chief. Around this glorious testimony, is a cloud of witnesses formed of such characters as Adam, and David, and Manasseh; a Saul of Tarsus, a woman of Samaria, a converted thief; the sinners of Jerusalem once clotted with the blood of a murdered Savior, and the sinners of Corinth once plunged in a sink of unutterable filth and corruption. The salvation that was enough for them is enough for my reader—enough for the greatest sinner. The healing water of the sanctuary will send its mighty tide to fill all the sinuous creeks of retiring despair, and to cover the highest Alps of guilt and sin. Since the mediatorial remedy has already been successful in the worst cases, "beginning in Jerusalem," the salvation of no sinner is impossible.

VI. The word of God ascribes the perdition of those who are lost, entirely and totally, to themselves.

On every one who perishes under the gospel, God sets a brandmark, which the consuming fires will never efface, "He heard the sound of the trumpet, he took not warning, his blood be upon him." It is this character that will make his face gather blackness in the day of judgment, and clothe him with eternal shame in hell. Hear how God speaks of these self-destroyers. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself,"—"this is the condemnation, that men loved darkness rather than light." "They rejected the counsel of God against themselves," "ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." "How oft would I have gathered you, but ye would not."

The destruction of sinners is never ascribed to an arbitrary perfection of God, never to a secret decree, never to an exclusive edict, but totally and thoroughly to their own love of sin. It is one of the bitterest ingredients in the cup of those who are lost, that they cannot ascribe an iota of their torments to any but to themselves. It would even gratify their inveterate enmity against God, if they could trace a tittle of their sufferings to an arbitrary or capricious purpose in the mind of God. If the salvation of those who are lost was not once a possible case, there was no difference between their case and that of the fallen angels; and it is difficult to show how they can be justly blamed for perishing, when their escaping was in very deed and from very appointment, actually IMPOSSIBLE.

The evidences which I have thus enumerated prove to my own mind, that the provisions of the atonement contemplate the salvation of all men as truly possible. The gospel is an authoritative warrant to induce every sinner to belive that *his* salvation is a possible case. This gospel is a document signed by God for this purpose, and may be pleaded with God by every suppliant for mercy. It encourages every sinner to apply for mercy at the throne of grace. The sinner's warrant for acceptance is not that he is one of the elect,—that he has some previous fitness,—that he feels love to the divine government: his only warrant is, that the gospel of the God that cannot lie, assures him that, "Him that cometh He will in no wise cast out." It assures him individually that "God sent his Son to the world not to condemn the world, but that THE WORLD THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED." It gives him this assurance as *one* of "the world." If words have any meaning, the meaning of the gospel is, that the salvation of every one of "*the world*" is a practical case. While a man is in "the world" he "might be saved." When he is out of "the world," his case is settled irrecoverably.

SECTION II.

The Duty of every one who hears the Gospel, to believe that Christ died for him.

I wish to argue this subject with men as accountable sinners, and not as curious disputants. I wish myself to forget, and I wish my reader to forget, that the matter of this section has ever been a controversial one. I take it as a shame to polemical divines and to Christian churches, that the great measure provided to settle the grand controversy between God and man, should be turned into an instrument of strife and contention among men themselves, yea, even among Christians themselves.

In the wording of the head of this section, my meaning is that it is the duty of every sinner who hears the gospel, to adopt and employ the words of the apostle Paul concerning Christ, "Who loved *me* and gave himself for *me*." These words are frequently quoted as embodying the frame of mind commonly called "assurance." The word "assurance" as used in theological discussion or religious conversation, means what is really the "full assurance of hope," though it is often misnamed "the full assurance of faith." The "assurance of *hope*" is the Christian's confidence and persuasion as to his personal state towards God, and his final salvation from sin. The "assurance of *faith*" is the penitent sinner's confidence in the designation, sufficiency, and applicableness of the atonement of Christ to his own case and condition.

The "assurance of FAITH" is the frame of mind with which a sinner is taught to approach the throne of atonement in Heb. x, 19, 20.. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us

draw near with a true heart in FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." In this passage, does the apostle,—does the Holy Spirit,—expect a penitent to approach the throne in the "full assurance" that he is *actually accepted*, and that he *shall* and *must* be finally saved? No; he is to approach with a full assurance and confidence that even he *may* be accepted and saved, and that "he who cometh shall in no wise be cast out."

Suppose a messenger had been commissioned to go through all the camp of Israel to announce the provision of the brazen serpent as a medium, for healing all those who had been bitten by the fiery serpents. Suppose any one in the camp—suppose each and all to say, "Do you really mean for *me* individually?" Would not the messenger cheerfully and honestly say, "Yes, I mean you, and whosoever is bitten." From such a testimony every one bitten might look up to the brazen serpent, in the full assurance of faith, that there was healing in it *for him*, and each might say of it, "Which regards *me*, and was lifted up *for me*."

It is to this assurance that every faithful herald of grace wishes to bring every sinner who hears him, even to the belief and assurance that Jesus Christ "loved him, and gave himself for him." Is the prominency which I give to this subject startling? Then I can only take up my lamentation that it has not been before made more prominent in the ministrations of truth, that its whole outline and features might have been more familiar to every hearer of the gospel. It is high time that it should take its due place in the ministry of the gospel. In this discussion are you jealous for the credit of some human system of theology? What?—would you rather that sinners perished, than that they be saved to the detriment of a theological system? It is to be lamented that in the Christian church, as well as in the Jewish, the "traditions of men" have the attachment and homage which are due only to "the commandments of

God." Let God be true, whatever theological system be found a liar. Let Christians and divines consent rather to sustain the crash of all the theological systems in the world, than reject or unsettle one stone in the temple of divine truth.

I will now state the evidences which prove that it is the bounden duty of every man who hears the gospel, to believe that Jesus Christ died for *him*, and made atonement for *his* sins.

I. The testimony of the holy scriptures plainly shews that the death of Jesus Christ concerns every man in the world.

For the fullest and clearest evidence of this proposition, I refer the reader to the following passages: John iii, 14—17; iv, 42; i, 29; iv. 51; 2 Cor. v, 10, 19. 1 John ii. 2; iv. 14; Mat. xviii. 11. 1 Tim. iv. 10; ii. 4, 5, 6. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Tit. ii. 11. Heb. ii. 9, 10.

There is not a hint in the scriptures that can suggest the apprehension to any sinner that Christ did *not* die for him. There is not the remotest allusion to any class of sinners for whom Christ did not die; though there are many references to classes *for whom* he died in vain. There is no text of scripture that expresses the sentiment that Christ did *not* die for every man.

The class of passages which assert that Christ died for "his sheep," and that he gave himself for "his church," do not at all exclude others. Such passages only point out the actual result of his death, and not its design, and aspect, and adaptation. Suppose an Anti-slavery society had ransomed all the slaves of our colonies, and designed to remove them to another country. Some slaves, nevertheless, proved so fond of their slavery, and so attached to their oppressor, that they would not take the benefit of the ransom. If the Society, or the historian of the society, speaking of the slaves actually emancipated, should say, "We redeemed you with a high ransom," or, "a great ransom was laid down for them" no reader would infer that the ransom had

not embraced the rest, who had loved slavery more than freedom.

The passages which I have marked above give a clear, simple, and unsophisticated testimony, concerning the applicableness of the death of Christ. Good sense and right reason require no warrant for believing a testimony, but its *truth*. This is truth, that Christ tasted death for every man; therefore, every man can say, and ought to believe, that Christ died for him. He can use the language of Paul, "who loved me, and gave himself for me."

II. The gospel comes to every sinner as an authoritative message to invite him, to require and demand of him to accept and partake of the benefits of the death of Christ.

Let the reader refer to the following passages:—Mat. xi, 28, 29; xxii, 2, 3, 4. John viii, 37. Isa. lv. 1—7. Rev. xxii, 16, 17. John vi, 29; xii, 35, 36. Acts xvii, 30. 2 Cor. v, 20 to vi, 2.

The parable of the marriage supper supposes the commission of the gospel to be, "*As many* as ye shall find, bid unto the marriage." If Christian ministers in their missionary search to "seek and to save that which is lost," *find* out every individual of the human race, they will act an unfaithful and a dishonest part, if they do not *bid* every one of them into the feast of provisions in the atonement of Christ. The gospel leaves out none; even rejecters and despisers are invited.

The belief or unbelief of a sinner cannot alter the fact of Christ's dying for him. A sinner cannot make it true by believing it, if it were not true before. Nor can he make that which was previously true, to be untrue, by his disbelieving it. The fact is unalterable, and cannot be annulled. That Christ died for many is true, whether believed or not; and that Christ tasted death for every man is as true as the Bible, whether believed or not. The sinner's belief of this testimony is an act of homage and obedience due from him to the declared will of God; it is a compliance with the invitations of

the gospel. His disbelief of this message is "making God a liar," and is, therefore, condemned as wrong and inexcusable.

In the message of the gospel God *offers* pardon, peace, and acceptance to all, "reconciling the world to himself" in Christ. God does *not offer* what he cannot honorably grant. As moral governor he cannot honorably grant pardon and reconciliation to any sinner, without an atonement for his sin, that is, he cannot offer acceptance to any sinner for whom Christ did *not* die. Unless atonement were made for a given individual, all the believing in the world would not save him; and to offer him salvation on his believing, would be horrible trifling. An offer of pardon to one who has never been atoned for, is an effect without a cause, a measure without a reason.

Christ is offered to the sinner as "the author of salvation," that is, as one that has made atonement for the sins of that sinner. An exhibition or an offer of Christ to the sinner, in any other character, is *not* the gospel. The gospel reveals and offers Christ to the sinner to redeem *him*, to cleanse *him*, and to save *him*. Christ cannot do these things for any sinner, without dying for *that sinner*. The Savior of man will not die again; therefore, since the gospel offers him as a Savior to every man, he has already died for every sinner—for all to whom the gospel *can* make an offer of him. Yes: this only is the ground of the broad and ample invitations of the gospel. The universal offer to every sinner, is not founded on God's foreknowledge that some will not comply, nor on the minister's ignorance as to the persons of the elect; but it is founded on the offering up of the atonement. The invitations of the gospel are founded on the actual provisions in the feast, and these are the same, whether those who are bidden hear, or whether they forbear.

III. Every sinner is now in the actual possession of mercies and blessings, which would never have come to him, but for the sake of the death of Christ for him.

The Lord Jesus Christ is "the Heir of all things," the "Head over all things;" for "the Father hath committed all things to the Son." Christ is the Heir and owner of every man's health and life, talents and property, mercies and influence. He is the heir and owner of these things, not as God, but as Mediator—as the author of atonement.

Let me reason this point with my reader. How came you to be possessed of these mercies and favors? You know that God has no way of shewing any favor to a sinner, except through Jesus Christ. If he could shew *any* favor, he could shew *every* favor, irrespective of Christ; and then the atonement must appear a measure unnecessary and unreasonable. You have all the mercies of this life, you have the means of grace, you have the strivings of the Holy Spirit. Did these come to you by natural descent from Adam? Came they by your own merits? Or, came they from mere arbitrary will of the divine Ruler? If you exclude the atonement, you cannot account for them.

Consider the three following facts:—every sinner is under the just curse of the divine government—the providence which extends any blessing to such a sinner, is the disposal of things by the atoning Mediator; and He is crowned with this authority, not because he is God, but because he tasted death for every man.

The mercies which you have are to you the effects of his death *for* you. Had he not, on the fall of Adam, interfered on the ground of his atonement, neither you, nor any other single child of Adam, would ever have come into being. Had this gracious interference not been for *you*, *you* would never have existed. Your existence, therefore, and all its mercies, come through him, and for his sake. It is for his sake that your life has been spared so long—it is He that has hitherto interceded for you, "spare it this year also." When you are ill, or any of your children, or friends ill, for whose sake do you pray for health to be restored and established? It is for Christ's sake; therefore, your health

and life are connected with the merits of his death. The language of every mercy you have, is, "I come for Christ's sake, and by neglecting or abusing me, you wrong Christ.

Now these things prove that Jesus Christ "loved *you*, and gave himself for *you;*" for if he died for these lesser favors, for temporal benefits, for your body—you cannot doubt that he died for your soul, and for its eternal welfare.

IV. Every hearer of the gospel owes duties towards Christ, which could only arise from the fact of his having died for him.

I will enumerate a few of them. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "Repent and be converted every one of you." "Pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden." Indeed there is scarcely a passage of the New Testament which does not record some such duties as I have mentioned. These are not duties which God as moral governor binds on man as moral agent with the sanctions of the moral law merely, but they are duties which "the Just God and Savior" binds on him as a respited criminal, with all the sanctions of the gospel message *and* of the moral law. The moral law could never alone, either require, or enforce such duties upon any sinner. They are duties which never could be required, but under a redeeming and restorative dispensation founded in the atonement of the Son of God.

The moral law marks out only the duties of moral agents; but the duties which I have enumerated are the duties of a *sinner*, a character which the moral law, as such, could never contemplate as the subject of *duties*, but as the subject of *penalties* only. The duties of a sinner, then, are duties which the gospel binds on him.

It is a grievous insult to the gospel of the blessed God, that divines should make it a question, "Whether every sinner who hears the gospel ought to believe it?" These

very divines think every man who reads their books ought to believe them; but if God send a letter of message and testimony to "every creature under heaven," they begin to dispute, whether every one who reads it, or hears of it, ought to believe it. OUGHT TO BELIEVE IT? Why, is the gospel *true*? If the gospel be true, it ought to be believed. It will perhaps be objected that the dispute about the obligation of sinners to discharge these gospel duties is not founded on any uncertainty in the gospel, but upon the inability of sinners themselves. But even this is indefensible. Men can believe one another. They can believe ancient and foreign historians. They can believe the testimonies of their favorite controversial divines,—why cannot they believe the testimony of God? The only reason is, they do not like it. Such a reason can never prove that a sinner ought not to believe the gospel, unless it can be proved that no man ought to believe a truth that he does not like. The truth of the case is, that no man can *disbelieve* the gospel but with the very same powers with which he could *believe* it, if he liked it.

Under the phrase believing the gospel, I wish to comprehend every act of homage, obedience, and devotedness to Christ as Mediator and Savior. As every sinner is accountable to Christ, Christ must have claims on every sinner for which he will reckon with them. The claims which Christ has on sinners are claims for their obedience to his call, compliance with his invitations, and cordial reception of a "saying worthy of all acceptation, that he came to the world to save sinners;" and all these are claims founded on his great atonement.

There are very few pastors who do not find in their congregations an awful number living and, alas! dying under an apprehension of this kind,—that religious duties are not binding on them, since they are not actually members of churches, or decided Christians. This is the reason why such multitudes neglect the Lord's supper, family and private devotions, conscientious attendance on the means of grace on the days of the week,

&c. They think that they may do these things if they please, or let them alone if they please, but they have no conviction that they ought to "take the yoke," and be *bound* to them. Hence they think that many worldly and sinful compliances are perfectly allowable in their case, which would be inexcusable in the case of religious men. Now this pestilential sentiment is one of the first born of the theology that I am combating. A sinner very naturally thinks that if Christ has done nothing for him as a Savior, he can owe him no duties under that character. To the sinner it is precisely the same as if the gospel had left him without a Savior, and therefore he must be free from gospel duties. Afterward, if he be persuaded that Jesus Christ died for him, he thinks that religious duties are binding on him, and he begins to attend to them. The supporters of this theology avow the correctness of these impressions in their sermons, and sanction it in the sacredness of religious conversation. The argument generally employed by them is, that religious duties ought not to be done irreligiously. This is true, but supplies no reason for abstinence from religious duties. Our Savior reproved the Jews for the manner in which they read the Old Testament, but he never exhorted them not to read at all. Paul reproved the Corinthians for the manner in which they celebrated the supper of the Lord, but he never hints that they ought not to celebrate the supper. It was the doctrine of Paul that every man living ought to live to Christ. "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them."

V. Christ himself will condemn in judgment every rejecter of the gospel, because he did not believe that He died for him.

This is the doctrine of the following passages. "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, BECAUSE he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of

* See Chap viii. p. 209.

God." "He that believeth not shall be damned." "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that OBEY NOT the gospel of Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." John iii; 18. Mark xvi; 16. 2 Thess. i; 7—11.

The whole of the xxvth chapter of Matthew proves that men will be judged by Christ in the last day, and judged according to their conduct towards him. Christ will not condemn sinners for *not* believing that he died for them, if the real truth be that he never had died for them. In the language of the Judge there will be nothing like the sentiment—"I adjudge thee to hell because I never died for thee."

Christ, in the course of his ministry '*upbraided* the cities because they repented not." They who refused to come to the marriage feast were blamed, and condemned, and destroyed. To these very rejecters it had been said, "all things are now ready," which they must have understood as "ready for *you*." They never doubted whether the master *meant* them or not. Eventually they perished, not because no provision had been made for them in the supper, but because they deliberately refused to partake of it. Mat. xxii, 2—10. Luke iv, 16—24.

"Bring these mine enemies which would not that I should rule over them, and slay them before me." Luke xix, 27. Did Christ really and verily propose to reign over them? Did he *indeed* offer himself *before* "they would not have him?" *Might* they have had him over them as *their* saving king? Here they are charged with a serious crime. Their crime is an opposition to his authority, a rejection of his mediatorial power; that is, an unwillingness to be governed and controlled on the principles of the atonement. They *would not* be saved by an atonement, therefore they are destroyed.

The Word, which is the formula to be used in the last judgment, declares that a "sorer punishment" shall befal the rejecters of the atonement, than those to whom it has not been published and offered. Their sorer punishment is founded on their crimes, because they have trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, expiated, or atoned, an unholy thing. These men were bound to receive the Son of God as their atoning sacrifice; and for not receiving him in this character, they are punished. All the rules of eternal Truth and Justice forbid that they should be punished for not receiving Christ as the Lamb of atonement for them, if the actual fact, and the real case be, that he never made an atonement for them. Judas shall not be condemned in that day, because he did not believe that Christ died for Peter—nor will any sinner be condemned because he did not believe that Christ had died for others; but because he did not believe that Christ "loved him, and gave himself for him."

VI. The greatest pains of a sinner in hell will arise from the consciousness that he rejected a Savior who had died for him.

"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." It is *not* that no light had been provided for *them*, or that no atonement had been made for them. This passage lays the blame at the sinner's door, and it is there that it ought to be. The sinner's conscience, in the day of final decision, will blame him in *nothing*, but *that* for which Christ condemns him. The Son of God will not blame the sinner for what it was *impossible* to avoid, he will not blame him for not being an angel, he will not blame him for not making an atonement for his sin; but He will blame him for sinning wilfully, for loving darkness, for neglecting so great salvation, for not believing the testimony of his gospel.

The day of judgment will declare the truth of the case between the sinner and Christ. The divine pur-

poses as to the extent of the atonement will be then unravelled, the grand problem will be solved. Follow the condemned rejecter of the gospel to the everlasting fire. Amid all his wailings and lamentations, no such sentiments as these escape his awakened conscience—"Well, it turns out, after all the offers and invitations of the gospel, that I was never atoned for; Christ, it is now clear, never died for me If I had believed him to be my Savior, I should have believed what, as is now proved, was not true. Yet, I am here in torments, because I did not believe what the upshot proves to be a positive untruth." Oh, NO, NO! The language of the sinner will be "I destroyed myself." "I have no cloak for my sin." "I would have none of his ways." "I loved darkness rather than light; here I find my condemnation—not in God—not in the atonement—but in MYSELF; it is here the worm that dieth not, finds all its venom."

VII. The exhibition of Christ to every sinner as having died for him, is the most powerful motive to personal and universal holiness.

1. It will make God appear more amiable in his estimation. Without this exhibition he has narrow, contracted, and suspicious thoughts of God; as if he were capricious, arbitrary, and partial. But the God who "loved the world," must be amiable and lovely. The Jehovah who will have all men to be saved, is no respecter of persons. The high and lofty One who swears, "As I live, I will not the death of a sinner," must be worthy of all love.

2. It will sweeten common mercies to him. At present he thinks his mercies have no connection with the death of Christ, and consequently he feels no gratitude to Christ for them. He regards them as some "uncovenanted" largesses thrown about him unaccountably. The gospel teaches him to see "the image and superscription" of "CHRIST CRUCIFED" around every mercy; and then every mercy has new charms for him—it is more dear and precious, more sweet and lovely in

his estimation. He will now become concerned to turn every mercy to the best account, to do the most good with it, and count it of worth only as it is of use for the cause of Christ, both in his own heart and in the world.

3. It will greatly embitter sin to him. Now he has only the slavish motive of punishment to induce him to avoid sin, and he never sees sin in connection with Jesus Christ. The gospel unmasks sin, and exhibits it to the sinner as the murderer of his best Friend, as a grievous wrong and insult to a Redeemer, who gave his life a ransom for him. In such connection with the cross of Christ, sin will appear "exceedingly sinful."

4. It will convince him how entirely salvation is of sovereign grace. It shows that God required no motive to induce him to have mercy on man; but that he only wanted an honorable medium for exercising it with safety to his government. He was as merciful without an atonement as with it, but without it he could not *show himself merciful* to offenders. The atonement does not provide that now God *must* save, or be unjust; for salvation is of free, unconstrained grace.

5. It will persuade him how groundless and unreasonable is DESPAIR. To the trembling and the fainting the gospel says, "One died for all—whosoever will, let him come—him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." No melancholy person has ever doubted whether a remedy has been provided, or whether it were sufficient. His doubts have been, about his own interest in the remedy, which he thinks to be peculiar, and limited to some class. The gospel authorizes *him* to say, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me."

6. It will demonstrate the folly and guilt of presumption. Many have the full assurance of presumption, but not that of faith or hope. The mere belief that a remedy will cure, will never effect the cure, unless the remedy be taken. He will feel that a salvation neglected will save no man.

7. It will show the full certainty of the salvation of every one who believes in Christ. "He that believeth shall be saved." Here is no uncertainty. It is the language of every perfection in God—of every decree in the divine purposes—of every drop of the blood of atonement—of every promise in the Bible—of every syllable in the intercession of Christ—and, of every fact in the history of redemption; all reverberate, "He that believeth SHALL be saved."

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE Holy Spirit has been exercising a distinct and individual agency in every dispensation of moral government, and the whole exercise of this agency is, what I mean by, the work of the Spirit. As the Father, so the Holy Spirit, exercises no agency but in connection with the great atonement of the Son. The Father has given all things mediatorially to the Son, and of these the Holy Spirit takes, in the exercise of his agency.

SECTION I.

The personal Agency of the Holy Spirit in connection with the Atonement.

I. The Holy Spirit has made the doctrine of atonement the cardinal and principal subject of divine revelation.

The primary revelation, immediately after the fall, announcing that "the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head," contained the great elements, and the living germs of this great doctrine, and foretold a gracious deliverance from evil to be effected through mediatorial interposition and sufferings. All the future and progressive influences of the Spirit only unfolded and more fully developed the power and beauty of this first truth. The whole scriptures are the history of the developement of this doctrine, that, "in all things the

atonement might have the pre-eminence." The atonement is the sum of every message from God to man, and the spirit of every promise, the mark of every prediction, the substance of every ceremony, the burthen of every psalm and spiritual song.

In every age good men became great in proportion to their growth in the knowledge of the doctrine of salvation by a Mediator. I might mention Abel and Noah, Job and Abraham, men who knew that their Redeemer lived, and who became great as they had clear views of salvation by ransom, and thus "saw the day of Christ." Moses was great as God's messenger to the Israelites, to expound to them the way of acceptance with God through a sacrificial Victim. Among the constellation of the prophets, Isaiah shines a star of the first magnitude, pointing directly to Bethlehem, more than any others of his age. I am often ravished with the vision of Malachi, who with an eagle's gaze beheld a beautiful and glorious system of righteousness and good-will, in the midst of which he saw the Mediator, as the centre of harmony to the whole—the SUN of the glorious system.

Clearer views of the atonement made John greater than all the prophets that preceded him. They had seen victims that brought sin to remembrance every year, and they had predicted a Victim to come, but he pointed to "the Lamb of God that *taketh away* the sin of the world." The apostles themselves grew in their knowledge of this doctrine, after the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Before this day Peter scarcely understood it, especially not when he said to Christ, "Far be this from thee, Lord." But after receiving the Holy Ghost, he preached this doctrine clearly and powerfully, and, taking his stand on the broad basis of the atonement, he directed all to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. It is in the knowledge of this doctrine that the apostle Paul appears transcendently great. So great was his admiration of this stupendous doctrine, in its length, and

breadth, and height, and depth, that he counted all things but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of it, and made the cross of Christ his only boast and glory.

All these good men attained to this greatness through the influences of the Spirit, whose work has always been to glorify the person and the atonement of Jesus Christ. All his work is connected with the atonement. All that the holy men of God have spoken concerning it, are ascribed to his inspiration. The gospel of the atonement is peculiarly the ministration of the Spirit. Ministerial gifts for expounding and exhibiting the atonement, are at the disposal of the Holy Spirit; and the rejection of the atonement is branded as the sin against the Holy Ghost. These, and such considerations, show of what importance the atonement is held among the doctrines of divine revelation, 1 Pet. i, 10—12.

II. In the arrangements of this great scheme, the work was assigned to the Holy Spirit of forming the character of the Mediator, that he might be a fit person to make atonement.

It is not meant here to refer to the divine character of the Mediator, but to the character of his mediatorial person, as God and man, or the Word made flesh. Suppose the question to be asked in heaven, "Who will be suitable to make this atonement?" The reply would be, "Not one of the rebels, for that would savor of rebellion —the person must be perfect in the sight of God, and yet a friend to sinners." None but the "JUST" could be admitted to die for the unjust. An intercessor or advocate for sinners, must have a relative worthiness of his own to plead; and such has "Jesus Christ, the righteous." The formation of this worthiness of mediatorial character in the person of Christ is ascribed to the Holy Spirit, Isa. xi, 1—5; lxi, 1—3.

When the Holy Spirit is said to have been given to Christ, I understand that the peculiar attributes ascribable to the Third Person in the Blessed Trinity were made to assemble and appear in the character of the

Son. In the scriptural revelation of the mediatorial economy, there is a perceivable individuality of character ascribable to the Father, which is not to the Son; and to the Holy Spirit, which is not to either. When Christ appears in majesty and glory, authority and goodness, he is "the express image of the person" of the Father. When he appears in knowledge and wisdom, truth and holiness, grace and kindness, he is "the express image of the person" of the Comforter.

The formation of the character of this mediatorial personage is the greatest work of the Holy Spirit. It is greater than forming the character of holy men. It is a work unique in the universe. As there is no person like Christ, embodying in himself all the gradations of existence in the universe, so there is no character like his, embracing the graces of all intelligences. To form this character, therefore, is a work of more grandeur and glory, than the sanctification of a sinner. It will give greater glory to the Holy Spirit than any and all of his other works. All intelligences will know with admiration, that it was "through the Eternal Spirit that Christ offered himself without spot to God."

III. The doctrine of the atonement is the great means which the Holy Spirit employs in his administrations in the world.

It is by his agency that the benefits of the atonement are applied to the salvation of sinners. This application by the Holy Spirit is as necessary to salvation, as the atonement of the Son, and the love of the Father. Without the sovereign good-will of the Father, salvation would not have been contemplated: without the atonement of the Son, salvation would not have been honorable to the divine government: and without the influences of the Spirit, it will never be actually effected. "It is convenient for you," the Lord says, "that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.—When he is come, he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and judgment.—He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." John xvi, 7—14.

If Christ had not "gone away" to suffering and death, to Gethsemane and Calvary, the influences of the Comforter had not come unto us; nor would he have been supplied with solid and honorable grounds for comforting us. The atonement of "Christ crucified," is the great doctrine employed by the Spirit to prove the glory of Christ, and to win the revolters of our world to allegiance and obedience. "He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." "He will go to Bethlehem and Calvary, and take of mine—he will take the history of my undertaking, and explain the principles of my atonement; and will convince the world, and lead you unto all truth." This doctrine is "the sword of the Spirit," which he delights to wield. This will open the heart, when the lightnings of Sinai, and the flaming sword of the cherubim, shall have failed. This is the doctrine which the Holy Spirit delights to honor, as has been proved in the experience of thousands of God's witnesses, in the history of churches and congregations, and in the narratives of missionary labors. If Christ be lifted up, and his atonement openly exhibited, sinners will be drawn and captivated; but on every church, and on every religious institution, that will not honor the atonement, the Holy Spirit fixes the stigma of "Ichabod," the glory is departed.

IV. To secure and honor the designs of the atonement is the great end and aim of the administrations of the Spirit.

The great aim of the Holy Spirit in all its operations, is to bring sinners to *use* the atonement as a medium of access to God, and to *plead* it as a ground of pardon. "He shall glorify me," that is, "my atonement shall be magnified and made honorable in the sight of the world, by his agency." All the work of the Holy Spirit tends to bring men to think highly of Christ, and his atonement. He will never take of the things of Christ to give men low and degrading thoughts of them. If any have low thoughts of Christ, and his atonement, let them

not be ascribed to the Holy Spirit, whose work it is to glorify Christ; "for every spirit that confesseth not, that Jesus Christ is *come* in the flesh," that is, is become incarnate, "is *not* of God."

Under the gospel dispensation, the Holy Spirit *argues* the cause, and pleads the claims of Jesus Christ, to all the honors which he has received in heaven, and to all the obedience he demands on earth. Of these things he will convince the world. There has been a controversy between God and the world. The world was placed under moral government, and against this government the world has rebelled; nevertheless God continues to enforce the claims, and still men oppose and refuse them. This controversy is of long standing, and is still pending; and the Holy Spirit is the agent sent to the world by the Father and the Son to *argue* the case, and to decide the controversy. When this Advocate, this *Arguer*, will come, he will make the world see, what it never saw before; he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

In whatever way the Spirit comes, whether by the word, or by miracles, or by gracious influences on the heart, his aim is to promote the ends of the atonement in the condemnation of sin, and the salvation of sinners. The WORD gives clear views of the evil of sin, and brands unbelief as the blackest rebellion against Christ. It reveals the glories of Christ, and claims the highest honors as due to him. It unmasks the malignity of Satan, and threatens eternal destruction to all his allies. MIRACLES have never favored sin, but have demonstrated and aggravated its daring hardihood. They were wrought in the name of Christ, and confirmed his testimony against the world. They have exhibited him who had the power of death, as conquered, and have shewed all things as subservient to the gospel. His gracious INFLUENCES always destroy sin, honor the righteousness of the Savior, and vindicate the eternal condemnation of all who rebel against God.

Whatever be the topic on which the blessed Advocate argues, whatever be the manner of his operations, He never loses sight of the atonement of the Son of God. In whatever light we contemplate his character, whether as Arguer or Sanctifier, Guide or Comforter, Earnest or Seal, the atonement is connected with the whole of his offices and ministration. In all things he is "the Spirit of Christ." He does not build but where the atonement has prepared the foundation; he does not cleanse, but in the laver of the atonement; he does not plead, but where the atonement furnishes an argument; nor does he guide, but where the atonement has opened a way.

SECTION II.

The Influences of the Spirit rendered accessible to all by the Atonement.

I. The influences of the spirit are exhibited in the scriptures, as exactly adapted to meet the case of sinners.

When we see, in the whole government of God, that "one thing is set over against another," we judge rightly when we conclude, that one is designed for the other.

The scripture describes the state of man as requiring these influences of the Spirit. "The natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither *can* he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed *can* be." "No man *can* come unto me except the Father draw him." These passages do not mean that the powers of man are insufficient for the designs of probation, and for the discharge of duties—but that the fact will turn out, that they *never will be* exercised in discharging duties without divine influences. They teach that man's opposition to God, and indisposition

to what is good, are so inveterate and perverse, that nothing will conquer them, but the influences of the Spirit. Man is darkness, and darkness can, by no process, produce light; he is dead, and the dead cannot quicken himself; he is enmity against God, and enmity can never work itself into love.

Divine influences are exhibited as meeting such a case of perverse ineffectualness. "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh; and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes," Ezek. xxxvi, 27. If any person were to exhibit to you bread when you are hungry, medicine when you are ill, pardon when you are condemned, liberty when you are in bondage, you would reasonably conclude from their fitness to you, that you *may* have them, that they are accessible to you.

II. The scriptures declare that God, for Christ's sake, is disposed and ready to distribute most bountifully every blessing that a sinner needs for his salvation.

One evangelist speaks of the readiness of God to give us "good things;" and another says, "If ye being evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Man needs this Holy Spirit, and God expresses himself ready to supply his need. The rich and copious abundance of the influences provided, show with what pleasure he will grant them. You need a supply that is infinite and uninterrupted—and here it is. God said to Abraham, "Walk before me and be perfect." Well might he have said, "Who is sufficient for these things?" God said, "I am God ALL-SUFFICIENT." Faith bowed, "That is enough." So for you, it hath pleased the Father, that in Christ all fulness should dwell—in a cistern low enough for you to reach, and capacious enough to satisfy all your wants.

Here, then, is an all-sufficient treasury, an undecaying plenitude of influences. Here is a spring unexhausted and inexhaustible, an undrained fountain, whose fulness is never diminished by the largest communications. "My God will supply all your need by Christ Jesus," was the language of Paul, who had drawn largely upon this resource.

The copiousness of the provision of divine influences is a proof that they are accessible, otherwise the full and clear exhibition of them would be a vain parade. See in nature and providence, the light that you have is more than you can appropriate, the time given to you is more than you can employ, and the health you have is much more than you improve. Why is this? It is to give you a hint of the bounty and liberality of God in diffusing all his blessings. Will he who is thus profuse in providence, be slack and niggardly in gracious influences? "Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened." No, answers the apostle, "ye are straitened in yourselves." The incapacity for more, and the reluctance for more, is in you. Oh, what influences you have neglected, or abused, or thrown away! Where is the man who has improved all the suggestions of the Spirit? What hearer of the gospel can ever persuade himself that he perishes because divine influences are not accessible to him?

III. God has established a system of means to enable sinners to participate in the influences of the Spirit.

If we wish for the divine blessing or the divine influences for the growth of a plant, or for the support of our life, we know well that there are certain means established for securing them, and that it would be sheer madness to expect the influences without the use of such means. The establishment of such means prove that the necessary influences are accessible if we really wish for them.

Gracious influences are also communicated in a stated course, not arbitrarily or capriciously, either as to time,

manner, or degree. I would not say that God has bound and limited himself to this stated course; what I mean is, that he will NEVER fail it. The Holy Spirit has been pleased to pledge his blessings to certain rules, and this does not diminish the grace and freedom of them any more than in natural influences. The blessings which descend on the labors of a farmer or a physician do not lose their grace and freedom because they are conveyed in a stated course. The establishment of an aqueduct proves that a supply of water is intended, and that of a pump that water is to be had; so the establishment of "means of grace" proves that grace is obtainable.

These means must be used. No man will become religious as a stone gets warm in sunshine, or wet in a shower of rain. He must be an Agent as well as a subject. He must use the appointed means. The connecting link between divine influences and human agency is hid in the hand of God, but he has revealed enough to show us that, according to his *arrangement* of the universe. He cannot convert a man unless that man exercise his own agency. When "*cannot*" is ascribed to God, of course, it is meant that such a thing cannot come to pass without changing the course of nature. For instance, as we find the world, he cannot make a man live unless he breathe, or see unless he open his eyes. In the like manner he cannot effect faith unless the sinner himself believes, or repentance unless the sinner himself repents. If this be disputed, the disputer must show that in the production of faith and of repentance it is God himself that believes and repents, and not the sinner. In all the arrangements of gracious influences, the agency of man only reaches the means, it is divine influence that effects the product.*

* On divine influences as exercised in relation to the condition of man, and to the ways of God, see a very able volume published in 1830, entitled, "The Work of the Holy Spirit in conversion," by HOWARD HINTON, A. M, of Reading. English theology has no volume like it, in

IV. Men are commanded to live under the influences of the Spirit.

"This then I say, 'Walk ye in the Spirit.'" It is utterly unreasonable to command a man to walk in sunshine at midnight; therefore the commands of a just God that men should walk in the spirit, suppose that the influences of the spirit are accessible to them. "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." Here the light is declared to be accessible, even to those who were walking in darkness. The command, "Walk ye in the Spirit," is urged with all seriousness and authority. A command thus given and thus pressed supposes that the influences of the Spirit shall go forth, as necessary to the persons thus concerned. Indeed, divine influences are used as a reason to urge upon men, the great duty of using their agency in holy exertions. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, FOR God worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." The argument is, work, for God works; use your agency, for God is using his; labor in your salvation while divine influences may be obtained.

V. Men are blamed for not having the influences of the Spirit.

Jude mentions some characters with deserved reprehension and blame, as "not having the Spirit." My reader may have thought himself, ere now, blameable for many things, but never yet thought himself blameable "for not having the Spirit." This is, evidently, charged upon these characters as a blame, a crime, a reproach. Yet they were not blameworthy if the influences of the Spirit were not accessible, but arbitra-

which the agency of the Holy Spirit is so scripturally explained, and so highly honored, in full harmony with the ample powers and obligation of human agency, and with the tremendous blameableness of human negligence. Dr. OWEN and HOWE in their respective excellent works on the Spirit, treat of divine influences more in their relation to the ways of God, than to the condition of man; though HOWE indeed, has some sound and powerful arguments to demonstrate the criminality of "not having the Spirit."

rily suspended, or capriciously withdrawn. The sluggishness and the inactivity of man is always charged upon *himself;* and if these influences were not accessible to him, to be without them would be his misfortune rather than his crime, and he would be an object of pity rather than of blame. God, both for his own glory, and for the other ends of probation, has not left the matter so, as that man may say, "I did not obey, it is true; but it is not my fault, for the influences necessary to obedience were not to be obtained, or they were arbitrarily withdrawn and held back."

VI. The most ample encouragements are given to prayer for divine influences.

It would be the height of unreasonableness and mockery to teach men to pray for an incommunicable and an ungrantable thing. If man is taught to ask for a thing, it is an assurance, that that thing is of great concernment to him, and is obtainable by him.

Prayer for the influences of the Spirit is encouraged from the nature of God, Luke xi, 13. God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, as readily and promptly as parents give bread to their children. There are, indeed fathers who have not a father's love, but this unnaturalness belongs not to our heavenly Father. He pities us as a father pitieth his children; and pity in him is pity in eternal and inexhaustible plenitude. He is invariably "plenteous in mercy." Suppose a child had to undertake a business or a trade at the request of his father, he would say, "I know my father —if I attend to my business, all needful supplies will be forthcoming—I shall not fail or break, for he has promised to supply me in every time of need." We know that a father, if he were able, would not fail such a son. Thus should every man argue, and feel persuaded, that in prayer and the use of means, the "supply of the Spirit" shall not be lacking.

God has given many exceeding great and precious promises, that he will supply all our need. "The Spirit" is the foremost promise of the New Testament,

and it is thus made prominent because if this be fulfilled, all the others will follow. All these are "yea and amen in Christ to the glory of God," because the "God that cannot lie," has confirmed them by an OATH, that we might have strong consolation. All such solemn declarations would be vain pompousness, if these strong consolations were not accessible to us.

VII. The scriptures represent the influences of the Spirit as accessible to every sinner, as is the atonement of the Son.

We have seen that the atonement makes the salvation of all men possible, and that it is the duty of every man to believe that the death of Christ is available for his soul in *propria persona*. The same train of argument might be successfully used, as to the relation of man to the influences of the Spirit, for an accessible remedy supposes the cure accessible, and an accessible city of refuge supposed the safety accessible.

The atonement of Christ is the medium and the honorable ground for dispensing and communicating the influences of the Spirit. Gracious influences, like all sovereign favors, come to the sinner through the blood of Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus himself dispenses these influences by an authority founded on his atonement. "If I depart, I WILL SEND him to you." He fulfilled this promise most signally on the day of Pentecost. He then showed that he had received gifts for men, and he issued them forth in such wide-spread largesses, and so soon after his departure, that the world might see the connection between them and his death, and ascension.

SECTION III.

The Sovereignty exercised in Divine Influences founded on the Atonement.

I. It is an awful fact that unless God will sovereignly exercise his gracious influences on the hearts of men, not one of the human race will ever avail himself of the benefits of the atonement, and consequently, no flesh would be saved.

Men will slight and neglect the atonement, not because they have no power or ability to avail themselves of it, but simply because they have no inclination or disposition to make any use of it. They cannot choose *death* without possessing and exercising the very powers that would enable them to choose *life*. It is a most grievous error to suppose that unless sovereign grace dispose these powers aright, man is not accountable and blameable for exercising them wrong. Divine influences are not in the list of the elements of human accountableness. The justice of God has supplied man with grounds sufficiently firm and broad to hold him accountable without divine grace. Man ought to do his duty, to love God, believe in Christ, obey his word, whether he have grace or not. If "not having the grace of God" is a good plea for not doing one's duty —the less a man has of the grace of God, the less is he obliged to obey God; that is, the more wicked a man is, the less and less is it his duty to be good; the less thankful a child might be to his parents for distinguished favors, the less is it his duty to thank them. Besides the very man that tries to palm this plea as an excuse with God will never allow it to avail with himself from his fellow-man. Suppose his child or apprentice to say to him as an excuse for neglecting his commands. "If I had the grace to obey you, I would; but as I suspect that God has not given me grace to obey you, I hope you will excuse me." Suppose again,

a man who refuses to pay him a sum of money that is due, to say, "if I had grace to be honest and upright I would be so, but as God has not given me grace to be so, have me excused." This very man who puts off the claims of God with such flimsy plea, would spurn all such excuses, and would treat him according to his ability to do right, and would actually make his want of disposition to be honest, an *aggravation* of his offence. The whole scriptures declare that God will judge mankind on the same principles.

All mankind are, of themselves, so opposed to the designs of the mediation of Christ, and so inclined and disposed to persevere in sin, that unless God in his sovereignty will exercise his influences in special and personal cases, not one of all the human race will ever be saved. Yet their rejection of salvation, in other words, their refusing to be saved, is solemnly pronounced by God to be a conduct criminal, blameable, and condemnable.

That without divine influences mankind would let the atonement sustain a total and eternal failure, may be proved from the nature of the case—from facts in the past history of man—from the doctrine of the scripture concerning divine influences—and from the impossibility of accounting for the conversion of a sinner on any other principle.

It is in the physical and moral constitution of the nature of man, that what he is *unwilling* to do, he never will *do*. Hence the scriptures speak of that which a man is *unwilling* to do as a thing *impossible* to come to pass. When Christ charges the Jews with this *unwillingness*, he represents their coming to him as *impossible*. "Ye *will* not come to me that ye might have life," for "how *can* ye believe which receive honor one from another;" "no man *can* come unto me unless my Father draw him." When we say that a kind father never *can* murder his own child, or never *will* murder it, our meaning is, that such an event will never come to pass. We do not mean that the thing is

physically impossible in itself. So when we say that no sinner will, of himself, come to Christ, we do not mean that he has not power to come, but that such an event will never transpire—for the enmity of the human heart against God never *will* change itself to friendship.

This statement of the case of man is corroborated by an unbroken chain of facts in the history of mankind. The ages and generations gone by, do not furnish one instance of a man who has ascribed his conversion from sin to his own agency and goodness of heart. All such persons recorded in the scriptures plainly declare, that it is God that made them to differ, and the theme of their song is, "not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." The cases are innumerable in which the best means have been tried and used in vain, though they were means *adapted* and *intended* to succeed with them. Witness the ministry of Noah, of Moses in the wilderness, of Isaiah, and of the Savior himself. Yet among men of the same character, means apparently less likely to succeed have prospered mightily. Such success, productive of such infinite good, cannot be ascribed to the capriciousness of the human will, but to the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

The holy scriptures invariably ascribe the success of means and instruments to divine influences. Their language is, "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do." "We are *His* workmanship in Christ." "You hath *He* quickened," &c. All the instances of conversion mentioned in the scriptures are ascribed to God: *e. g.* those of Zaccheus, Paul, Lydia, &c. The Bible also teaches us that *prayer* to God for the exercise of sovereignty is one means of obtaining success. If man will change himself, it is to man the prayer ought to be made, and not to God. To address a prayer to God for the conversion of any man, is an acknowledgment that such a conversion is to be effected by his grace and Spirit.

On any other principle than the sovereign application of divine influences, it is impossible to account for the conversion of man. The theory of "common grace" will not account for it, for it leaves the question behind it, "How comes one man more than another to make a right use of this 'common grace.'" The self-determining power of the will will not account for it, for there is no such thing. A will not determined by motives, is not the will of an intelligent and accountable being. To say that peculiar circumstances of afflictions, &c. will not account for it unless these peculiar circumstances always produce the same results; to think that conversion is an accident that happened by chance, is an insult to a wise God that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and is the efficient cause of every good thing in the universe. God alone changes the heart.

II. God has a sovereign and independent right to impart divine influences in what degree and on whomsoever, he pleases, according to the counsel of his own will.

In all the disputes against the exercise of this sovereignty the condition and character of mankind as *condemned* criminals *worthy* of death, are always forgotten. At the bottom of every reasoning against the sovereign dispensation of divine favor, there always lurks a supposition that man has some claim upon his Maker; and on such *data* time will never see an end to the dispute.

Upon the supposition that every man is unworthy of any favor from God, the question in dispute is very simple. It is this—"Has God a *right* to shew a kindness to any person that does not *deserve* it?" Probably there is not a man on the earth that will deny that God has such a right; most assuredly there is not a man that would consent to abide by such a denial, that God should shew him no more favor than he deserved. Captious cavillers, who forget their *condemned* character, will still dispute, "Is it *just* that such a right should be exercised?" This objection supposes such a *right* to belong to God, but doubts its *justice* when exercised. This ob-

jection is the shell of a theological monstrosity unparalleled in hideousness. It supposes that God will exercise his *right* in a *wrong* manner. It is worse, for it supposes that God's right to confer benefits on the undeserving is A RIGHT TO DO WRONG. The disputant supposes that it is wrong in God to confer favors upon any of his creatures beyond their due, and in the whole argument forgets, that he himself is a condemned, and undeserving character.

Take an illustration of this. Suppose Newgate, or any other prison, to be thronged with *criminals* under sentence of death, and regarded by all honest men as *justly condemned*. It is known in the constitution of the realm, that the king has the prerogative of reprieving and pardoning any criminal he pleases. The actual exercise of this prerogative to pardon has no injurious aspect upon the condition of the condemned criminals. Rather, the existence and the exercise of such a prerogative is pure and entire good. It is not a prerogative to inflict tortures on them, but its very design and aspect is to confer good. Suppose such a prerogative *not* to exist—the exclusion of it would not improve the condition, or better the prospect of any one criminal. You, therefore *get* no accession of good by excluding the king's prerogative. But allow it to be introduced,—and you immediately secure a splendid amount of good. Suppose the king, in the exercise of his prerogative, to pardon any number out of them, and you gain so much good. Will the gaining of so much good be really a *wrong* to the rest? Try to answer these questions. *How* does this good wrong *them*? Does it make their case *worse*? Does any thing befal them, after all, worse than what was *justly due* to them? Would they have been better off, had there been no prerogative exercised?"

Your conscience will not answer these questions in the affirmative, but your heart says, "I should not LIKE the king to pardon other offenders and pass by ME." Yes, that is the real truth, that is an accurate statement of the case. All your opposition to the exercise of di-

vine sovereignty proceeds from what is implied in the little word "ME." And yet, why not *you*? Have *you* not *deserved* to die? Have *you* any *claims* upon his prerogative? Is God not to exercise his prerogative because *you* do not LIKE others to have more benefits than you? Examine yourself, and you will discover that it is only when you do not consider yourself as a criminal justly condemned, that you quarrel with the exercise of God's sovereign prerogative.

God is perfectly independent of the whole universe, and all-sufficient for his own happiness and glory. It is the glory of his nature and of his character, that all the good in the universe is the product of his own good pleasure, and that he works and produces good freely, without constraint, and without necessity. His grace is free, unbiassed and uninfluenced. He can give or withhold his favors without any impeachment of his character. He can confer his benefits when, how, and on whom he pleases. God always claims to himself the free exercise of his sovereign right, to have mercy on whom he will have mercy. He could neither see, nor foresee any good in man that should induce or deserve this exercise of sovereignty, for God hath chosen men *unto* obedience, and not *for* obedience; and that they *might be* holy, and not because they were so. If he exercised this prerogative in consequence of any previous good in man, his *grace* would be turned into distributive justice, salvation would be of works, and boasting would not be excluded. If God exercise no sovereign prerogative, but only acts according to previous conditions in man, then the glory of his grace would depend on the capricious will of man, and he would be doing and working nothing *because* that it was the good pleasure of his will. The scriptures assure us that this sovereignty is exercised *not* according to works of righteousness which we have done, but according to God's own counsel and good-will.

III. The atonement is an honorable ground for the

exercise of sovereignty in the special communications of divine influences.

The whole mediatorial work of Jesus Christ is so worthy and so meritorious that it *deserves* that some measures should be taken to *ensure* it from entire failure. It is not to be expected, in the administration of moral government, that God should give us an account of his sovereign measures, or to supply us with direct reasons for the discriminating speciality that is visible in the communication of divine influences. It is enough for us, that is, it is enough for all the ends of our accountableness, to be assured, that God is under no more obligations to provide divine influences for us, than he was to provide an atonement for us; and that as the benefits of the atonement are available to all applicants, so "the supply of the Spirit" is accessible to all who "ask" it.

Nevertheless God has condescended to "set forth" the infinite dignity and transcendent worthiness of the atonement as supplying an honorable ground, and a just vindication, for the exercise of speciality in divine influences. The atonement is a measure of such ineffable worth, that it inherently deserves that its ends should be accomplished; and that it should not be, like other measures and expedients in divine government, liable to *entire* failure. To this splendid expedient God has, through the church, called the attention of principalities and powers in heavenly places; and all these Intelligences watch the movements of this measure, and diligently observe its bearings on the interests of the universe. If, then, a measure of such grandeur and dignity *entirely* fail, the universe may, in amazement, ask the Creator, "What wilt thou do to thy great name?"

The *entire* failure of the Eden dispensation would have clouded the divine character, had it not been rescued by the introduction of a compensative atonement. The *entire* failure of the Sinai experiment would have reflected dishonor on the divine glory, but it was re-

deemed by the establishment of a "better Hope." But if the atonement *itself* ENTIRELY fail, what shall *then* vindicate the honor of the wisdom, and power, and grace of God? How awfully disastrous will be the upshot of moral government? It would shatter every world in the empire of God, and stun all intelligences "in all the places of his dominions."

The disastrous upshot would not have been effectually prevented by leaving the atonement entirely to the liberty of free agents; for in such hands the failure would be entire and total. The measure of its success, therefore, is entrusted to the sovereignty of divine grace, and not to the sovereignty of human capriciousness. This arrangement makes the measure of success *certain*. "It is of faith, that it might be of GRACE, that the promise may be SURE to all the seed."

All who believe the doctrine of divine influences take it for granted, that the atonement is *capable* of entire failure, for they assert that the blood of Christ will save none, unless the Spirit apply it. This is the very thing we are now pleading for. Nothing can prevent this entire failure but the *determination* of God to impart sovereign influences to make some men differ from others, and to *give* unto them for the sake of Christ to believe in him. And God's great defence against the charge of arbitrariness or capriciousness in this sovereign speciality is, that the atonement of Christ DESERVED that it should not entirely fail. If any sinner be disposed to complain of God thus sovereignly applying the benefits of the atonement in any special case, conscience must flash conviction in the breast of that sinner, that God has only used for its designed purpose that very atonement, which the sinner has been invited and commanded to use for that purpose, but which he voluntarily rejected, and spurned as the off-scouring of all things.

IV. The exercise of divine sovereignty in the special communications of divine influences is an HONOR to the atonement.

The Christian church has been deluged with boisterous discourses and turbid volumes to prove that the speciality of divine sovereignty is a disgrace to the atonement. Against this most formidable flood I would unfurl a banner lifted up by the hand of the Redeemer himself. "In that hour, Jesus rejoiced in Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; EVEN SO, FATHER, FOR SO IT SEEMED GOOD IN THY SIGHT." Luke x, 21, 22.

The Lord Jesus Christ views the difference in the spiritual conditions of men as the special product of the sovereign agency of God; and considers the exercise of divine sovereignty as a perfectly satisfactory account of the matter. He further regards this sovereign speciality as a positive "good" to the universe, and as entitling God to "thanks" and praise. It is true that this account of the matter shocks the hearts, and disturbs the theological systems of many good Christians, but it does so, only so far as their hearts and theological sentiments differ from the heart and the doctrine of Jesus Christ. This view of the case perfectly satisfied Christ; why, then, does it not please you?—"Let the mind that was in Christ be also in you."

There are four considerations that ought to induce us to rest satisfied in the sentiments which satisfied Christ.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ perfectly *understood* this subject. "No man *knoweth* the Father but the Son." He thoroughly KNEW the mind and the plans of his Father. The sentiments which he expresses in the above passage are not his guesses and conjectures—but he completely *knew* the whole truth of the case.—If the *argumentum ad verecundiam* be valid any where it must be here.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ was perfectly *benevolent*. As a benevolent Being he would not be satisfied with any measure that was wrong, unjust, and injurious in any of its bearings. If the speciality of divine sovereignty were such a measure in reality, he would not have approved of it. He viewed the exercise of divine sovereignty as a source of happiness to the world. "It seemed GOOD in thy sight." God knows what IS *really* "good," and Christ *knew* what was "good" in the "*sight of God*." The exercise of sovereignty is "good" in the sight of God; why is it an *evil* in your sight? You are not a better judge than He is of what is truly benevolent.

3. The Lord Jesus Christ was altogether *holy*. As a holy Being he could not be pleased with what was unholy in itself, or had an unholy tendency. He could not be pleased with any thing that would cause sin, or that would supply an apology for sin. There are systems of theology that suppose that this is precisely the case with this doctrine of sovereign speciality. Many argue that it produces heedlessness and licentiousness, and that is an excuse for living in sin. It should, however, be remembered that this is the "sovereignty" of theological systems—not the sovereignty of God as revealed in the scriptures. In *that*, Christ who *knew* his Father's sovereignty, saw no aspect or tendency of the kind—and we must allow that what had, or what had not, a holy tendency was known to him.

4. The Lord Jesus Christ was *deeply interested* in the subject? It was by the exercise of this sovereignty that he was to see of the travail of his soul. He never thought that his harvest would have been larger and more splendid, if it had been left to the self-determining sovereignty of the human will. He regarded it as more sure in the hands of his Father. Divine sovereignty settles every jewel in the mediatorial diadem. This arrangement made Christ *happy*. Why does it not make *you* happy? One of the parties, Christ or you, must be wrong! Bethink ye—You often read of

his toils and labors, of his sorrows and tears, you never hear of his rejoicing but this *once*, and then it was in his views of divine sovereignty! This glorious subject made him "rejoice in spirit." It unfolded "the joy that was set before him." For the exercise of sovereignty, he "thanked" his Father, the Lord of heaven and earth. He considered these special displays of sovereignty as exhibiting God worthy of all gratitude, praise and glory. That God should exercise his sovereignty to secure the designs of the atonement against utter failure, the Lord Jesus Christ considered as an honor conferred on his mediatorial undertaking. The clear and ample manifestations which the exercise of sovereignty gives of the entire character of God,—the immense and magnificent accession of happiness which it brings to the universe,—the full consistency of its operations with the honors of infinite justice, surround the CROSS with a halo that is ineffable and "full of glory."

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE CHURCH.

SECTION I.

The designs of the Atonement to be infallibly secured in certain instances.

THE designs of the atonement in reference to mankind have already been secured in numerous instances; and we are informed by the scriptures that there shall be such instances of its success, in every age of the world. The persons, in whom the success of the atonement is instanced, form what is called, the CHURCH of Christ. These instances are not matters of chance,—they are the result of definite purpose, and of an adjusted plan settled in eternity. God will direct that the workings of the great principles of the atonement shall infallibly issue in the personal salvation of a multitude which no man can number, so that "the faith of God shall not become of none effect."

He is a theologian of no mean temerity who will meet this statement with a negative. It would be, in fact, to say that the designs of the atonement come to pass at random. Hitherto the doctrine of this statement has been combated only by a liberal use of the ample and furnished arguments about the free agency of man; but in the heat of conflict, and the din of battle, it has been forgotten that God is a FREE agent, as well as man. Besides, in the smoke and dust of polemics, these arguments have been brandished as if man would always use *his* free agency well, if he were left to it; and God could never use HIS free agency without

infringing on the rights of man. A theological system founded upon the hypothesis, that if God ever exercise his free agency, He is sure to exercise it wrong; or, if he does what he wills with his own, he is sure to injure some persons,—should indeed make its defenders examine more minutely its foundations, and take heed to the towers thereof.

The 'certain instances' in which the designs of the atonement shall be secured, mean, special cases of definite persons. It is meant that personal predestination shall certainly issue in personal salvation. If the reader would rather have the statement that they who were personally foreknown shall be personally called and glorified, I can have no objection to it, for "whom God did foreknow, them he also predestinated, and whom he predestinated them he also called." To cut off the link of predestination, will not make the links of foreknowledge and calling fit better into each other, and thus make the chain look fairer or stronger. Suppose the chain ran, "whom he foreknew them he also called," how is it improved? WHAT did God foreknow about the called? He foreknew that they were enemies to him by wicked works, that this enmity would by no means change itself into love—that they would not make themselves to differ—that they would never listen to his call, unless he would give them his Spirit to take away the heart of stone—and he foreknew that he would give them that Spirit. "Yes" it is rejoined, "but he foreknew it *conditionally*." This is one of the jargons of systematic theology. A definition of "conditional fore-knowledge," is a great *desideratum* in moral and theological science. Does it mean that God foreknows the meeting between the agent and the condition—but does not see any further,—does not foreknow what the result of the meeting will be? If God does not see the result, it cannot be called FOREKNOWLEDGE. The principles of mental philosophy, as well as the revelations of theology know no more of conditional *fore*-knowledge, than they know of condi-

tional *past* knowledge. A man who, in order to maintain a fond metaphysical conceit, would assert that a certain event in the Roman empire was but conditionally known to historians, must calculate largely on the tender mercies of mankind not to be treated as a dreamer. If there be any prophecies which have come to pass, and which God only foreknew conditionally, the question is decided.

God foreknew with perfect certainty the special instances in which the designs of the atonement should be secured in the personal salvation of particular individuals. I use the phrase, personal or *particular salvation*, rather than that of *particular* redemption, for this reason. The phrase, particular redemption, as often used in theological discussion, covers a *fallacy* which is seldom detected in the heat of argument. If by particular redemption is meant that the ransom price was given only for some particular persons;—if it means that only some particular persons were *atoned* for, then it is wrong, and directly opposed to the scriptures. If the phrase particular redemption means that only some particular persons shall in the event prove to be actually delivered from sin to heaven, then it is true, just in the same way as particular providence is true. A particular providence is the operation of the provisions of a general providence, sovereignly directed to bear upon the interest of special particular persons, and particular salvation is the working of a general atonement, made to bear upon the interests of particular persons, with sovereign speciality. The advocates of general atonement never mean by such a phrase, a general actual deliverance of all men from sin and misery in the event; they simply mean by the word "redemption," the ransom price, the atonement that was offered up for all, that whosoever believeth, might be saved. The phrase "particular salvation," then, seems to steer clear of the supposed fallacy.

I. The absolute or perfect certainty of the particular salvation of special persons is not at all inconsistent with

the provisions of a general atonement, intended as the means of salvation to all.

In the whole of this book it has been "the writer's end," to prove the universal extent of the atonement of Christ. The atonement has been exhibited as *capable* of utter failure. It is now intended to show that it shall not utterly fail, but that it shall infallibly prosper in the actual salvation of special and particular persons. We will, therefore, proceed with calmness and candor, to examine the harmony between the particular salvation of certain persons, and the unlimited extent of an atonement for all.

1. There is the same relation between the atonement and all, as there is between providence and all. Providence is the means of supplying all men with physical and moral furniture necessary for the ends of their being here. It furnishes all men with capacities, means, and opportunities for action and improvement. All men are sufficiently supplied with abilities, means, and opportunities for advancement in wealth, learning, liberty, and civilization. This is the general provision, but the history of six thousand years, tells us, that the advancement of men has not been as general as the provision. The designs of the general provision are fully secured only in special cases, and in all such cases it comes to pass by "the BLESSING of God." In the provision there is nothing to exclude any man from wealth, learning, &c. Nevertheless, wealth and learning are only enjoyed in special instances. Take learning as an example. The provision for improvement is general and open to all. The sun, and the moon, and the stars, have always presented the appearances which they did to NEWTON and his scholars, yet the cases are special and few in which men, like them, tabernacle among the heavens, and take stars and systems for their books. NEWTON acted freely in availing himself of the general provision, and every man who is *not* a NEWTON, acts freely in disregarding it. It is assuredly, to the glory of God to suppose that He intended to

produce a *Newton*, and that the endowments of his mind were designed to be conferred on him. You cannot find an adequate cause, in an intelligent universe, for such a product, but "the blessing of God," according to his will and purpose. Yet Newton was as free and laborious as if there were no purpose of the kind.

Why may it not be so with mankind and the provision of the atonement? There is no decree to exclude any from the benefits of the atonement. They who accept the atonement are conscious that they act freely under the blessing of God, which is only another name for divine influences. The atonement is a remedy in moral government like any other remedy in providence. Medicinal virtues are given to plants and minerals, as a general provision for diseases among men, but the application of them is special and particular. As to providence, no one will argue that the provision was made BECAUSE particular persons were to be healed. Unfettered common sense teaches us that particular persons were healed BECAUSE of the *special* application of the *general* provision to individual persons. After the same manner, the atonement was not made for all, *because* God intended to save some; but some particular persons are saved *because* the Holy Spirit "takes of" the general atonement, and sovereignly applies it to particular cases.

2. The same relation exists between atonement and all, as between the word of God and all. By the word of God, I mean all that God has revealed to man as a system of motives. These motives, in all their extent and influence, belong to all accountable beings. Some have these motives exhibited more abundantly and more clearly than others. Some, under their influence, become better fathers or children than others, or better masters and servants. Wherever these motives are successful, it is by the blessing of God, and wherever they fail it is by the voluntary negligence of man. The provision of motives is general, but the instances of

successful result are special and particular. The general provision of motives was not made *because* these particular instances of success were to be realized, but these instances come to pass because God specially blessed the general provision. It were highly incongruous to argue that the general provisions of the British constitution were made only for the particular instances in which they were observed, but were never intended for those who disregarded them.

Again I would ask, Why may it not be thus with the atonement? Providence is the medium of furnishing all accountable beings with abilities and means; divine revelation is the medium of influencing all by motives; and the atonement is the medium of saving all by faith. Man is free in using providence, he is free in yielding to motives, he is free in pleading the atonement. There is a speciality in the providential furniture, there is a speciality in the operation of motives, and there is the same speciality in the application of the atonement. It is therefore undeniable that the special application of the benefits of a universal atonement is in perfect agreement with the whole constitution of the moral system that we occupy; and that if our creeds clash with this, they must clash with the universe.

Let us try to illustrate this case of speciality. Suppose we say,—and "O let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once"—suppose we say that, on the foresight of this world's being peopled by sinful generations, there would have been no atonement but for God's intention to save. He foresaw that after all his provision, men would be so wicked that they would not accept of this atonement, and that, therefore, he determined to exercise his sovereignty to secure some, whom he gave to his Son as persons, in whom the designs of his death should be infallibly magnified and made honorable. Jesus Christ knew these, definitely and personally, and had a direct reference to them in his sufferings and death. If a special reference to them in the divine government does not involve a denial of a

general providence, I cannot see, how a special reference to them in the death of Christ can imply a denial of a general atonement.

Should some objector say—"since it was foreseen that some would not accept of it, why was an atonement made for them?" I would say, that the objector cannot claim an answer. He replies against God. He must suppose another system of the universe. He might as well ask, why God took the Israelites out of Egypt, when only two of them entered Canaan,—or ask, why God made free and accountable creatures. Jesus Christ has taught his disciples to say, "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Perhaps, however, we might be within the bounds of legitimate inquiry, if we were to suppose that it is impossible, on the present principles of moral government, to make an atonement for the sins of the elect, without affecting the sins of the others. On the present principles it is impossible to administer, even *providence* itself, for the benefit of some, without affecting others. What would you think of a medicine that would only cure the predestinated? What would you think of a land that would yield a harvest only to those who were decreed to sow it? What would you think of the sun shining only on the good and the elect? Just such a thing would be an atonement that would only benefit the select few decreed.

But I will take the favorite notion of the atonement. I will suppose an army of a thousand soldiers to rebel against their rightful sovereign. And I will suppose that the king is determined to save five hundred of them, and that, to effect this honorably, the king's son consents to suffer ignominy and death for the sin of these five hundred. Now, I mean, that this cannot be done without affecting the other five hundred. An atonement is an equivalent for a threatened punishment; and the design of an atonement is, to suspend the execution of the penalty, and yet secure the *ends* of that execution. These ends could not be secured in the five hundred

to be saved without affecting the five hundred left. Let us consider, what are the ends of punishment that are to be secured by an atonement? They are to shew the evil of rebellion, to express the king's determination to maintain his law, and to shew that even when he pardons, it is on honorable grounds. The king cannot condemn the rebellion of the five hundred to be saved, without, by the same measure, condemning the rebellion of the rest. Yea, he *intends* to express to the *rest* his determination to maintain his law.

This comparison would be valid if the five hundred left were in the same state as fallen angels. The atonement of Christ even affects devils, so far as to express the wickedness of their rebellion, the determination of Jehovah to honor his government, and that he will exercise mercy only on grounds honorable to his law. The devils feel this—they believe it and tremble. If the five hundred left are intended to represent the "rest" of mankind, the analogy fails. Let us suppose that after the king's son died for the five hundred to be saved, the government issued a proclamation, declaring that the other five hundred perished because they refused the benefits of the son's death. "REFUSED the benefits of his death?" an astonished empire would exclaim, "when it is *known* that he only died for the favored five hundred!" "*Perished* solely *for* refusing the benefits?" might the hardened rebels mutter, "when it was a previous fixed arrangement, that his death should not be available for us?"

This comparison, then, does not give a correct representation of the circumstances of mankind in connection with the atonement. The relation of the atonement to all mankind, to the saved, and to the lost, I conceive to be somewhat of this kind. It was foreseen that this world would be inhabited by a sinful race of accountable beings. They were to be in a state of probation. The accepting of the atonement of the Seed of the woman was to be the test of *their* probation, as the tree of knowledge was of Adam's. They had

every necessary power, and means, and motives, to accept it; but they loved darkness rather than light, and they voluntarily rejected it. God therefore determined to exercise his sovereign pleasure in graciously influencing some to accept it for their salvation.

I am much inclined to think that the exercise of sovereignty in applying the benefits of the atonement to some more than others, is a measure ABOVE the atonement, but exercised through the atonement. Thus the atonement itself is a measure *above* moral government, and yet is exercised *through* moral government. So miracles are measures *above* providence, yet exercised *through* providence. In like manner, divine sovereignty is *above* the atonement, yet exercised *through* it. In such language I only embody, in other words, the doctrine of Paul concerning the sovereignty of God. "When it is said that all things are put under him (Christ), it is *manifest* that HE IS EXCEPTED who did put all things under him." In the atonement God did not sink his supremacy, or part with his sovereignty. The atonement laid him under no obligation, under no constraint, to exercise his sovereignty. He had a sovereign right *without* the atonement, and *with* it, to have mercy on whom he will have mercy; but he has been pleased to exercise this right *through* the atonement. He is supposed actually to *exercise* his sovereign agency in saving, only AFTER men have exercised their agency in rejecting his claims, and *after* they become liable to what is justly *due* to them for their sin, and to evils which they themselves have voluntarily *chosen*. So that after all, the rejecters receive nothing but what is *just*, nothing but what they *choose* themselves.

Will any say, "*Cui bono*, such a statement—what do you gain by it?" GAIN! I gain every thing; I gain the accountableness and blameableness of men for *not* being saved; I gain the unsullied honors of the divine perfections and government in the condemnation of such perverse rejecters; I gain the eternal and imperishable glory of free and sovereign GRACE, that condescended

to save *any* of such a race of evil-doers; I gain every thing that can make theology valuable, and religion practical.

II. The sacred scriptures give us the most clear, ample, and cogent evidence, that the designs of the atonement shall be infallibly secured in instances without number.

Scriptural testimonies of this class are so abundantly and so constantly exhibited in Calvinistic Bodies of Theology, and in other works and treatises bearing on the doctrine of predestination unto life, and so accessible to the inquirer, that a formal induction of them here is deemed unnecessary. The sacred scriptures distinctly assert that the designs of the atonement shall be infallibly secured—that Christ SHALL see of the travail of his soul—that the word of reconciliation shall NOT return to him void—that as many as the Father gave him SHALL come unto him, and that none SHALL be able to pluck them out of his hand. They lift up for us the veil of futurity, and assure us, that in the last day there *shall* be, and *will* be, many on the right hand of the Judge; and they represent heaven as infallibly to be peopled with a multitude which no man can number, all of whom shall have washed their robes in the BLOOD of the Lamb. The revelations of the scriptures consider this as a *sure* case. Another class of scriptures designate and mark out the *characters* in whom all the purposes of the death of Christ shall be fully accomplished. They are called his "sheep," his "friends," his "church," and, "the people whom the Father gave unto him." The scriptures do not mark these as the *only* characters for whom the Son of God died, but as the only characters in whom the great designs of his death are *fully* answered. Another class of passages represent the production and formation of these characters as the result of a divine and eternal purpose and plan. They are called out of the world from amid others, according to God's purpose and grace. Christ gives the honor of sitting at his right hand in his kingdom, only to those

for whom it has been prepared by the Father. Hence, in the last day he will say to these very persons,—"Come, inherit the kingdom *prepared* for you before the foundation of the world." They are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, and chosen in him that they should be holy. The scriptures hold up the sovereign RIGHT of God to produce such characters, according to such purpose, in all the sunbeams of truth. He has a right to have mercy on whom he will have mercy—Even so, for so it seems good in his sight. No theological writer has ever, manfully and openly, attacked the sovereign right of God to confer any favors on any sinners he pleases; that is, no one has fairly attacked the doctrine of sovereign election. The crusade against this doctrine has been perfectly Quixotic. Some have mistaken the proud towers of FATE for it. Others have mistaken the dungeons of REPROBATION for it. In the mean time the doctrine itself stands as a fair and glorious TEMPLE, whose foundations are laid deep in the eternal purpose and grace of God, whose pinnacles sparkle in the light of uncreated glory, and over whose portals is the inscription of truth: "*Him that cometh I will in no wise cast out.*"

SECTION II.

The Influences of the Atonement on the interests of the Church.

The atonement of the Son of God for sin, is the ground for calling a CHURCH out of the midst of mankind. This is one reason why Jesus Christ, in his mediatorial character, is called the "foundation" of the church. The first stones of the church of God were built on the promise of the "Seed of the woman," and on this every succeeding stone has been placed. This is the ground of the general call of the gospel; and what a sure foundation it is for a minister to stand upon, to beseech *all* men to be reconciled to God! On this

the prophets and apostles, and all wise master-builders have placed the living materials of the "church of the Lord."

The ministry of the atonement is the great instrument for collecting the church. Unto Christ the gathering of the people is to be. Something else may gather a sect of philosophers, or bands of philanthropists; but it is this alone that will gather a church. "And I, *if* I *be lifted up*, I will draw all (men) to myself." It is emphatically called the word and ministry of reconciliation. It is the trumpet of jubilee that announces the acceptable year of the Lord, and calls back to their home and their inheritance, the captives and those that are ready to perish.

This doctrine has always been in the church. When Adam, and Eve, and Abel, formed the first members of the church, the doctrine of the atonement was a cardinal article of its creed. In the church there was never known any way of acceptance with God but through an atonement. Whatever the church lost in seasons of afflictions and defeats, it has never entirely lost the doctrine of the atonement. Its outlines, from behind the dim transparency of ceremonial shadows, never entirely faded away from the vision of the Jewish church; and in the Christian church the ordinance of the Lord's supper has been a plain and imperishable emblem of the atonement, to show forth the Lord's death till he come. Though the emblem has been criminally shrouded from the people in the dark foldings of superstition, or, at another time, shamefully exhibited to the populace in a mantle of State trappings yet the doctrine itself has never quitted the Christian temple. Ecclesiastical History proves that in the precise proportion that any church becomes erroneous on the doctrine of the atonement, that church, whether in Rome or in England, among Episcopalians or Dissenters, becomes corrupt. It is also capable of proof, on which no entrance can be made now, that a church that *denies* the atonement of Christ is not a church of his.

The provisions of the atonement have a special reference to the well-being, the purity, the perpetuity, and the glory of the church. The general provisions of the atonement give the Mediator power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; and constitute him "Head over ALL THINGS," with speciality of application, "to the CHURCH." To the church, all the provisions of the atonement, like all the arrangements of nature and providence, work together for good.

All the services of the church have a direct reference to the atonement. No service in the Christian temple is acceptable to God, but that which is offered through the hands of the "*minister* of the sanctuary." The prayers of the church take Calvary in their way to heaven. In singing with grace in the heart, the harp must be tuned for the "Song of the Lamb" at the foot of the cross. It disowns all preaching but "the preaching of the cross." The church is baptized into the death of Christ as an atonement for sin; and in the Lord's supper it sits to the feast of the atonement.

The atonement will be the theme of the church for ever and ever. In heaven not a note will be sounded but in harmony with "the BLOOD that speaketh better things." The burthen of the song will be "UNTO HIM that hath loved us, and WASHED us from our sins in his own blood." The harp of Saul of Tarsus will send forth a sound which the harp of Gabriel does not reach, and a throng of ransomed sinners will for ever swell the strain, "*washed us from our sins*," and the sounds of the harpers harping will thrill eternity into melody and praise.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE VARIOUS DISPENSATIONS OF REVEALED RELIGION.

SECTION I.

The progressiveness of Divine Dispensations.

It has pleased God that the revelation of his mind concerning the salvation of sinners should pass through various and progressive degrees, or stages, of advancement, which, in theological nomenclature, are called, different dispensations. It is to such a delivery of revelation in various and successive parts and parcels, that Paul alludes in the commencement of his epistle to the Hebrews. "God who in sundry parts and in various manners, spake of old to the fathers by the prophets, hath *now* in these last days *of the Jewish dispensation and beginning of the gospel age*, spoken to us by his Son," Heb. i, 1.*

As a gradual progressiveness is visible in works which are acknowledged to be of God, such successive dispensations in divine revelation can be no valid objection either to its reality, or to its certainty. Even if divine revelation had been given instantaneously, and not in successive portions and degrees, it would, nevertheless, have been various and progressive in its character and influence, according to the respective capacities and personal circumstances of each individual to whom it was proposed. This would be a dull world, if every man in it were of the same gradation of intellect, and if successive generations derived no information or im-

* M'Lean on the Epistle to the Hebrews, works, vol. v, in loc.

provement from their predecessors. Rational beings, however large their capacities, can know nothing of God any farther than God manifests himself; and He manifests himself in his WORKS and in his WORD, which are all multiplied instances and evolutions of his power, wisdom, and goodness. The full light of an instantaneous revelation would probably be inconsistent with the frame of the human faculties, and incompatible with a state of discipline and probation. If such a revelation would not overwhelm and oppress the faculties with the splendor of its blaze, it would probably render them inactive, so that there would be no more praise-worthiness in accepting a testimony from God, than there is in receiving light from the sun? And such a condition of things could not be a state of probation.

Rational beings are so constituted and so circumstanced, under the discipline of moral government, as to be capable of progressively tending and advancing towards moral greatness and strength of character. The light of prophecy reveals that the whole mass of human population is capable of this progression, and that by the diffusion of religion, liberty, and the arts, the people of the globe will, as a body, advance to such moral worth and manliness of character, as to be ashamed of oppression and slavery, falsehood and wrong, envy and war.

As for the church of Christ, the entire testimony of the scriptures is unequivocal and certain, that it shall thus progressively advance to the full proportion of manly growth and masculine vigor; when it shall display and exercise, not the puny and tender limbs of an infant, but the nerves, and bones, and muscles of full-grown men; and when its sanctuary shall be not so much the nursery of babes, as the home of a gigantic generation. All the various dispensations of religion, and all the different talents and offices in the church are only an apparatus of divine government, "for perfecting the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ,] till we

all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a *perfect man*, unto the *measure* of the *stature* of the *fulness* of Christ." This progressiveness of the church does not terminate in the church. It affects other intelligences in the universe; for *through* the church the manifold, and the perpetually unfolding, wisdom of God is made known to principalities and powers in heavenly places, who desire to look into these things, and as they look, advance in the knowledge of the works and ways of God.

While the progressive dispensations of revelation were suited to the circumstances of the faculties of man, and in harmony with other works and ways of God, we must think that such an arrangement was *intended* to do honor to the Person and to the atonement of Jesus Christ. "For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than that house."*

SECTION II.

The influence of the Atonement retrospective as well as prospective.

1. The doctrine of the atonement has been prominent and foremost among the articles of religion under

* "If we had notice of a certain stranger being about to come into a country, and should observe that a great preparation was made for him, great things were done, many alterations made in the state of the whole country, many hands employed, persons of great note engaged in making the preparation; and all the affairs and concerns of the country ordered so as to be subservient to the design of entertaining that person; it would be natural for us to think, surely, this is some extraordinary person, and it is some very great business that he is coming upon. How great a person, then, must HE be, for whose coming the great God of heaven and earth, and Governor of all things, spent FOUR THOUSAND YEARS in *preparing* the way! Soon after the world was created, and from age to age, he has been doing great things, bringing mighty events to pass, accomplishing wonders without number, often overturning the world in order to it. He has been causing every thing in the state of mankind, and all revolutions and changes in the habitable world, from generation to generation, to be subservient to this great design. Surely this must be some great and extraordinary Person, and a GREAT WORK INDEED it must be, about which he is coming."—Pres. Edwards' 'Hist. of Redemption,' works, vol. v., p. 132.

every dispensation. There never has been a dispensation of mercy towards mankind since the expulsion from Eden, without a marked reference to sacrifice and atonement. Though every succeeding dispensation has improved on the preceding, yet every one of them has had the same leading elements and principles. In every dispensation we find a universality of aspect, a Sabbath of holy retirement, an atonement for wrong, an imputation of sin and worthiness, the church membership of children, seals of outward ordinances, liableness to failure, and frustration only through unbelief. The principle of atonement has always been in the foreground of every dispensation, as might be witnessed in Abel, in Noah, in Abraham, in Job, in Moses and the prophets. In the Christian dispensation the atonement is all in all; and even in the celestial dispensation at the close of probation, the Lamb of atonement will always be in the midst of the throne.

2. The holy scriptures are the code and the chronicle of these dispensations. Some, indeed, boldly assert that they have read the scriptures repeatedly, and have never been able to find the atonement there. Whatever may have been the success of these Zoilan inquirers, the apostles, and Jesus Christ himself, assert that *they found* the doctrine of the atonement in the Old Testament, and that "Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." As to the New Testament, the Jews and the Greeks found this doctrine in the addresses of the apostles, and made it a ground of serious objection against their ministrations. Had the apostles preached in the style of modern Socinians, and determined to purge their creeds and discourses of this doctrine, the Greek would not have been offended, nor would the Jew have stumbled. The Judaizing teachers had early introduced among the Galatians a doctrine without the Christian atonement, but the apostle distinctly and broadly avers, that such a doctrine is entirely ANOTHER GOSPEL, and brands it as "accursed," though it were delivered by an angel from heaven.

3. The reason why the *doctrine* of the atonement is found under every dispensation, is, because the influence of the atonement reached and affected every dispensation. The atonement was available in every age of the world. The scriptures are decided and clear with regard to the retrospectiveness of the death of Christ. He is represented as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Peter says, that men are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, who verily was fore-ORDAINED before the foundation of the world, but was MANIFEST in these last times. Paul also says, that there was a covenant confirmed of God in Christ with Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law by Moses; and that believers, like Abraham, were saved by that covenant, and not by the Mosaic institutions. The atonement of Christ is represented as *buying off* the punishment due for the sins committed under previous dispensations, and as vindicating the justice of God in forgiving them. The death of Christ was for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant. God set him forth as a propitiation to declare his righteousness for the remission of *sins that are past*, through the forbearance of God. Rev. iii, 8. 1 Peter i, 19, 20. Heb. ix, 15. Rev. iii, 25.

4. The arrangement that the atonement should have a retrospective influence is consistent with the whole of God's moral government. We find that, unlike physical causes, moral causes operate long before they come into actual existence themselves. Thus did the deluge affect the interests of many before it came to pass; the possession of the land of Canaan operated on the Israelites long before they inherited it; the advent of the Messiah had the same retrospective influence, and the moral provision of a day of judgment sends back an influence that reaches to the dawn of time. Thus may the atonement of Christ, from "*the hour*" in the garden, send back a worthiness, that was always available for sinful man. Hence the hundred

and forty-four thousand from among the tribes of Israel, as well as the countless millions from among all nations and generations of men, are represented as praising the Lamb that died.

5. The retrospectiveness of the atonement supplies us with a principle that accounts for many things, otherwise inexplicable, in the progress of the divine dispensations. It accounts for the extraordinary appearance of Christ, in the early ages of the world, as the angel-Jehovah. It explains the names and the titles which Christ has assumed as the head of all economies, such as First-born, Heir of all things, Alpha and Omega, &c. It is the only thing that gives a substantial meaning to the Jewish types and ceremonial institutions. It accounts for the subserviency of each and all previous economies, to the dispensation of the fulness of times. It gives oneness to the Church through every changing dispensation. It makes the Old Testament promises valid under the new dispensation, for if these had not been confirmed and ratified by the death of Christ, they would not have been yea and amen, either before or since the advent of Christ. It is this principle that gives unity to the song of heaven, for had the saints of the Old Testament been received to heaven irrespectively of the atonement of Christ, the elements of their happiness, and the themes of their song would have been different. So then, it is "the *glory* that excelleth," that throws the refulgence of its light to make any dispensation truly glorious.

6. The retrospective influence of the death of Christ on all former dispensations, furnishes an answer to what has been often regarded as an unanswerable argument for the limitation and restriction of the atonement. It has been vaunted with a high tone of triumph that it is blasphemous to say that Christ died for those persons who were in hell some hundreds of years previous to his death; and this has been regarded as an irrefragable proof that Christ did not die for all.

This argument has force only on the hypothesis that Christ suffered the identical penalty due to sinners. The argument is, that it would be monstrous for Christ to suffer the punishment of persons who were actually suffering it themselves at the hour of Christ's crucifixion. If the ARMINIANS allow the data of this hypothesis, their theory of a universal atonement is at once crushed; for it is impossible to show how JUSTICE can inflict a punishment on the substitute which it is at the same time, and has been for ages, literally executing upon the criminals themselves.

This difficulty is obviated by the doctrine that the sufferings of Christ were *substituted*, instead of the literal penalty due to sin, as a *ground* or *reason* for not inflicting on the sinner the sufferings due to him. It did not necessarily and unavoidably do this, as a *quid pro quo*, but it was available for this by being pleaded as such by the sinner for his remission. As a *moral cause* the death of Christ had an influence long before it actually took place, just as the promise of payment realizes an influence long before the payment be actually made.

Take the case of antediluvian sinners for an instance. Was their salvation ever a POSSIBLE case? Was it their own FAULT that they perished? Were they in as HOPELESS a state as that of the fallen angels? For what purpose did the Spirit of God STRIVE with them? It was, no doubt, for their salvation. But, has God any salvation for any sinner irrespective of the atonement of Christ? Was THEIR salvation possible if the atonement, in promise, did not reach THEIR case? These very men were called to believe promises which were to be established by the influence of a future atonement. If these promises were not established as true and sure, in their offers, by the atonement, the event proved it was no crime to doubt and neglect them. God, therefore, had a public atonement to vindicate the measures of his government towards these lost sinners, on the same principle, that he will have a

public Day of Judgment to vindicate his administrations towards all others who have perished. If we plead that an atonement can be of no use for them that perish, we might as well argue that a day of Judgment can be of no use for those who are already in punishment; for in both cases we forget the character of the divine government. Under every dispensation, the atonement was a sweet savor unto God both in them that are saved, and in them that perish, the one a savor of life unto life, to the other the savor of death unto death. Every unprejudiced mind will see, that it was as necessary for Christ to die to justify the condemnation of sinners, as it was to justify the admission of saints to heaven under every dispensation.

SECTION III.

The universal extent of the Atonement not inconsistent with the limited promulgation of the Gospel.

The advocates of a limited atonement have argued, that if God had given his Son an atonement for all, he would have given and sent a revelation of that fact universally to all.

This objection is founded on wrong principles. It supposes that God cannot justly perform any one good, unless he also do every other conceivable good in connection with it. It supposes that the atonement cannot be of *any* benefit to any persons unless they are informed of it; whereas we know that thousands are benefited by providence, who never knew that it is the providence of God; and we have seen, in the progress of this inquiry, that mankind owe even their existence to the mediation of Christ, though they do not know it. It supposes that the atonement was offered on the principle of commercial justice, so that God is bound in equity to dispense all the good, for which he had value received in the death of his Son. It supposes that all the good which the atonement was capable of securing

shall be infallibly attained, though it is a contemplated FACT that very many will NEGLECT this salvation, receive its grace IN VAIN, and come SHORT of the heavenly rest. It supposes that, notwithstanding man's abuse and neglect, and loss of moral means, God is bound to continue them to him; whereas it is an inseparable characteristic of moral government, that the use of means is left to the free choice of accountable beings. It supposes, also, that God must *inform* every individual of *all* the good that he is doing in the universe.

The question has been frequently asked, "Did Christ die for those who have never heard of his atonement?" For a solution I would suggest the following hints:

1. We have already seen that God *may* and *can* do good, *e. g.* providence, to a creature, without letting that creature know the *medium* of doing it.

2. God has provided ample means to make the provision of *this* medium known to all who are concerned.

3. As it is the duty of every nation to come out of its barbarism, ignorance, and political bondage, so are all the nations of the earth under obligations to come forth, from the moral darkness in which they have involved themselves.

4. All people who possess the knowledge of the death of Christ are under the most awful responsibility to communicate it to those who need it.

5. The revelation which God has given of his salvation is unrestricted, and of a universal aspect; and the limited promulgation of the gospel, is not owing to the scantiness of the provision, but to the negligence of the people who possess it, and hold it back in unrighteousness.

6. All will be dealt with according to the light that they have. And wherever there is a heathen Cornelius, he will be accepted before God for the sake of a Savior, of whom he has not heard.

7. FAITH is necessary to salvation only to those who have the gospel. Faith cometh by *hearing*—and hearing can only be where the gospel is. INFANTS are

saved for Christ's sake, though they do not know the medium of their salvation; and so might a virtuous heathen, wherever such can be found.

8. Missionary institutions take for granted that Christ has died for heathens, who have never heard of his death. If Christ has not died for them, what message can these institutions send to them? When a missionary arrives among a heathen nation he tells them, "Jesus Christ died for you." Suppose he go to China, instead of to India, would that circumstance imply that Christ had died for the Chinese, but not for the people of India? Does the fact that he delivers the message to the heathen of the nineteenth century imply, that Christ had not died for the heathen of the eighteenth, or the fifteenth, &c. Christ has died for them, whether he goes there or not—for a fact in the nineteenth century cannot alter what transpired in the first.

There is one topic more to which I would advert. It is that the extent of the atonement is not to be measured by the actual success of any dispensation, but by the design and aspect of all dispensations. Each and all of these dispensations had a universal aspect of good-will towards the interests of all mankind. Their limitation was not owing to any sovereign restriction from God. But, say the objectors, if Christ was intended for the salvation of all men, how comes it to pass that so few are saved?

1. This implies that God *must* save all whom he CAN save. But POWER is not the rule of his administration. He CAN create more worlds—for no one would say that He has created all the worlds that he *could*. And it would be the highest blasphemy to think that no more good is done in the universe, because God CAN do no more. If power were his rule, his government would not be moral.

2. The salvation of sinners is not the last end of the atonement, but the GLORY OF GOD. His last end in endowing minerals and vegetables with healing virtues

is not the cure of disorders, but his own glory. And in a free and moral government the provisions redounds to his glory, whether men use them or reject them.

3. All that is in the gospel is adapted, designed, and intended to be the means of saving all men, and all men are invited and pressed sincerely to use them.

4. The gospel system invariably ascribes its inefficacy to save all men to their own unbelief and voluntary rejection of its provisions.

5. Nevertheless, through the exercise of sovereign grace, the number of the saved will not be few, but will far exceed the number of the lost.

6. To limit the efficacy of the atonement to save, to the actual instances of its success, is incongruous. You do not measure the power to create by the actual number of worlds created. You do not measure the virtue of a medicine by the number of persons which it cures. You do not limit the power of Christ to work miracles to the mere number actually wrought. You know that he was prevented from working some miracles by the unbelief of the people. By parity of reasoning, the efficacy of the atonement is not to be measured by the number of the saved.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO THE ETERNAL STATE OF THE UNIVERSE.

The entire universe of God is under the government of Jesus Christ. In the present administration of it there is a mixture of good and evil, but he intends to remove out of his moral government every offence and "every thing that defileth." This administration of it is to come to a close, and then the state of probation will end, accountable beings will be reckoned with, sentence will be passed on each class of agents, and their respective states fixed. By these measures a separation will be made between the good and the wicked. Rewards and punishments will be awarded to each respectively. Both will be awarded for eternity, and both will be awarded by a mediatorial authority founded on the atonement. The glorification of the saints, the rewarding of angels, the condemnation of the wicked, and the eternal condition of all beings are connected with the mediation and the atonement of Christ.

SECTION I.

The influence of the Atonement on the Happiness of Heaven.

All the blessedness and all the glory of all heavenly Beings are connected with the atonement of Jesus Christ. The spirits of just men made perfect owe every thing to it. The whole of their happiness is represented as consisting in—being with Christ where

he is—in having a clear and full sight of all his glory —in being as to their souls and bodies perfectly like him—in having without interruption the most intimate intercourse with him,—and in having an ample and an eternal share in his glory, dominion, and blessedness, being glorified together as joint heirs.

The happiness of angels will take a character or a modification from their long inquiries and services in connection with the great atonement of *their* Lord. Their interests were embraced in the mediatorial system, by which measure their present happiness was increased, and their eternal happiness secured. Their eternal adorations are connected with the atonement. In heaven they will be always praising him, singing, "Worthy is the LAMB that was SLAIN." They cheerfully join the ransomed of the Lord in celebrating his praises; and though one of the sweetest lines of our song is *out* of theirs, yet they will always desire to look into these glorious themes, and never will they forget the scenes of the manger and the cross.

The scriptures teach us to regard the eternal glory and blessedness of God as connected with the mediatorial atonement. The FATHER will rejoice in the redounding of all things to the praise of the glory of his GRACE, according to the eternal purpose which he had purposed in Christ Jesus. The SON will be pleased and satisfied in seeing of the TRAVAIL of his soul. The joy of the HOLY SPIRIT will be connected with GLORIFYING Christ, by introducing to heaven millions of souls sanctified and formed after his likeness. For this all the works of God were made, and all the word of God spoken. Through this all the divine perfections were displayed and honored, and all the divine purposes accomplished and glorified. The mediatorial administration of the divine government shall come to a close, but the influence of the atonement, on the interests of the divine empire, shall never end.

There are two elements in the state of the blessed that are inconsistent with a restricted atonement on the

principles of commercial redemption, viz., its freeness, and its gradations. Commercial redemption supposes that Christ suffered so much punishment for so many sins of the elect, and consequently by so much suffering, purchased so much blessedness for them, and for them only. The blessedness of heaven is, first, *free*—all of pure, unmerited, and unpurchased grace. It was not *due* to the elect; nor did the atonement constrain the Father to confer it from *justice* to Christ. It is meant that public justice was honored in awarding blessedness to the saints *for the sake* of Christ—but *justice* was not the *ground* and cause of the award—it was sovereign, free grace exercised through the medium of the atonement. If, however, Christ paid so much suffering for so much blessedness, that blessedness is due in justice, either to Christ, or, according to his will, to the persons to whom he paid the amount, whose song must be to the praise of the glory of his *justice*.

The blessedness of heaven, secondly, has gradations as one star differeth from another star in glory. Now on the principles of commercial redemption, how will you account for the gradations of saints in glory? This commercial hypothesis supposes that Christ sustained or paid greater sufferings for a great sinner, and less for a sinner of a lower grade. Here, then, we have two difficulties:—First, the more Christ suffered for any one, the more he deserved for him, and consequently he must have a greater share in the blessedness. Secondly, The reason why any one may be least in the kingdom of God is, that Christ suffered least for him; and Christ suffered least for him, because he had the least sins to suffer for! How mercenary, pitiful, and absurd! On the contrary, the scriptures represent the atonement as the medium, and not as the measure of the rewards. Though the reward is not *for* our works, it is *according* to them. As the atonement contemplates God as free agent, so it contemplates man as a free agent. Consequently though all

rewards come from free grace through the atonement, yet the measurement is, "he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." Such an arrangement accounts for the gradations in glory on principles honorable to the government, for it supposes every saint perfectly and fully happy in his gradation according to his several ability. They will never have the apprehension that they have so much glory because Christ has deserved and purchased no more for them.

The eternity of a happy universe will be perpetually and progressively unfolding the glories of the GREAT ATONEMENT, for amid all the splendor, blessedness, and joy of the heavenly worlds, "the LAMB will be the light thereof."

SECTION II.

The aspect of the Atonement on the Perdition of the Lost.

On the day that shall terminate the probation of all accountable beings, they will all be judged by the Mediator, and the eternal separation between the good and the bad shall be effected by mediatorial authority. It is not in his authority as God, the Maker of all things, that Christ will judge, but in his authority as Mediator, and he has no authority as Mediator, but what is founded on his atonement.

I. The eternal condemnation of fallen angels will be connected with this mediatorial authority founded on the atonement.

The scriptures clearly assert, and constantly suppose, that a race of fallen spirits and wicked intelligences do exist, that they exert an agency and influence in this world, and that their agency is exerted entirely for evil. These fallen and wicked spirits have attempted to ruin the whole human race. They have tried to convert

this world unto a theatre of the most malignant evils. When the Son of God came as a second Adam to oppose the progress of evil, they grievously afflicted him, and made every effort to conquer him. They have been, since, employing all their agents and instruments for crushing and destroying the church of Christ. With inveterate and undiminished malignity they have constantly aimed at clouding the honors of the divine perfections, and at frustrating all the divine purposes, and especially, purposes of mercy and favor.

As the eternal happiness of angels will take a character and modification from their services in the cause of the atonement, so will the eternal punishment of fallen spirits take a character from their machinations and opposition against the atonement. Though they have not *rejected* the atonement, they have opposed it from enmity against the redeeming measures of the Seed of the woman, and the bruising and crushing of their agency and influence will be by mediatorial power and authority.

II. The condemnation of the heathen who have perished without hearing of the atonement will be an act of Christ as the Mediator.

It is through the provisions of the atonement that the heathen have had *their being*. Had it not been for the prompt interposition of Christ in Eden as Mediator to "save the world," neither the heathen, nor any other nations would ever have come into existence. They have become members of moral government, therefore, and mental endowments and means of accountableness have been conferred upon them on account of the introduction of a compensative dispensation. Consequently, all the favors of providence, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness come to them, though they do not know it, through the mediation of Christ. They will, therefore, be dealt with according to what they *have* through the atonement, and not according to what they have *not*. As they have not received the *ministry* of the atonement, they will

not be condemned for rejecting that, but for abusing or neglecting what they had actually received.

It is sometimes objected that it were unreasonable to judge the heathen on the principles of the mediation of Christ, since these principles were never known to them. This objection would suppose it unreasonable to judge them on any other principles. On what principles *can* they be judged? If they be judged on the principles of God's providential government over them, it will be objected that they never knew that the government under which they were, was the providence of God. If they be judged on the principles of God's right to them as their Maker and Owner, it will be objected that they did not *know* that God was their Maker. "He will judge them," say some, "as the God of nature;" but they do not know that he is the God of nature. The objection then, must suppose that they are excusable, that they will not be judged, and that they are not accountable to God. Against all this, examine the word of God. There you will find that the heathen are ALREADY condemned upon principles which are not known to them. The word of God *now* condemns their manners and actions, and we cannot doubt that this "judgment is according to the truth" of the case. Though the word of God judges them *on* these principles, it judges them *according* to what they have, and not according to what they have not. What the word of God condemns now, it will condemn in the day of judgment, and its condemnation will be pronounced by the Mediator. The Judge of the whole earth will do right, and to him, they stand or fall.

III. There cannot be a doubt that the condemnation of the rejecters of the gospel will be connected with the atonement.

That sinners will perish notwithstanding an atonement for them, is one of the most flagitious and tremendous facts in the history of evil. This fact is so awfully melancholy, and, on some theological principles, so unaccountable, that many have disputed the reality of it,

and have indeed denied that those who perish had any relation to the atonement, as their perdition would be a great dishonor to it. This strange and awful fact, then deserves an examination.

1. It is an indisputable fact that sinners perish notwithstanding an atonement made for their sin.

1. The scriptures declare plainly that Christ died for all, and yet they announce as plainly that all will not be saved. No one will dispute the melancholy fact that all will not be saved, but they dispute whether Christ has died for all. Paul, in 2 Cor. v, 14, 15, assumes the death of Christ for all as a conceded, or, indeed, as an undisputed point. It is therefore beyond a doubt, that though Christ died for all, yet all will not be saved.

2. It was foreseen and contemplated that the atonement of Christ would not have the same effects on all. It was known that Christ should be for the rising and falling of many in Israel, that he should be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to the world; but to the saved, the power and wisdom of God; and that the atonement would be to some the savor of life unto life, and to others the savor of death unto death. By saying that such effects were foreseen and contemplated, it is not meant that such consequences were intended and contrived, but that they were known and recognized as possible and probable. We do wrong when we deny such consequences, merely because they run athwart our theological views. These results did not thwart the theology of the inspired writers, and they ought not to thwart ours.

3. The holy scriptures avowedly suppose that there are some cases in which the death of Christ will be of no effect. In Gal. v, 2, 3, 4, Paul distinctly mentions two cases which would make the atonement of Christ unavailable and unprofitable. To any man who trusted for salvation either in outward ceremonies, or in works of law, the atonement of Christ would be of no effect; it would be to him as if Christ had never died. Here

is no allusion that Christ had not died for such a man, but a distinct avowal that Christ had died for him in vain. Final impenitence is another case which the atonement of Christ does not reach, and, speaking with reverence, could not reach. No purposes of moral government could be secured by an atonement for final impenitence, and such an atonement would be as unreasonable and unjust as an act of pardon to persevering and persisting rebels.

4. The death of Christ for souls that perish is used as an argument against our being the occasions of their perdition. "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died." "And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" Rom. xiv, 15. 1 Cor. viii, 11, 12. If there be meaning in "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth," these passages teach us, that souls *for whom* Christ died might by our wrong conduct be destroyed and perish, and that their perdition by such means is a grievous wrong, and a public injury against Christ. If it was ever the doctrine of Paul that souls for whom Christ died could never perish, these very solemn warnings and injunctions are worse than serious trifling. He speaks of "destruction" and "perishing," as results that would take place, in given cases, notwithstanding the death of Christ, and as consequences which the atonement *did* not, and *would* not prevent.

5. It is solemnly announced that all the rejecters of the atonement shall perish, notwithstanding its worth and sufficiency, Heb. ii, 2, "How shall we escape, (neglecting, or) if we neglect so great salvation?" Heb. x; 26, 27. "If we sin wilfully after that we receive the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin," or the sacrifice for sin is no more available for us. Fallen angels cannot be charged with neglecting a salvation that was never intended for them. This great salvation, then, has some relation towards the men who perish which it never had towards fallen angels. Men perish, not by being left without a

salvation, but by neglecting the salvation provided for them in the atonement. The apostle supposes that these persons for whom the atonement was made, may reach a case in which this atonement will be no longer available to them,—they are gone beyond its reach. But *were* they ever *within* its reach? Did the atonement continue *for any time* available for those who have ere now perished? The apostles take this as a granted truth, and founds upon it, as on a sure foundation, a powerful and awful argument for cultivating a state of mind corresponding with the designs of the death of Christ. It is here clearly assumed that there is nothing in the provision of the great atonement to prevent the perdition of those who neglect it.

6. The fact that an atonement has been made for those who perish is employed as an argument for the infliction of sorer punishment upon those who reject it, than upon those who have not lived under its ministry, Heb. x, 29. The blood wherewith these sinners have been sanctified, that is, atoned or expiated, is the blood of Christ. Yet, notwithstanding this expiation they receive a sorer punishment for despising and rejecting it. If this blood never had expiated such sinners, to them it was an unexpiating and an unappropriated blood. If they were not atoned for by it, it is impossible to say how they can justly deserve a sorer punishment for regarding it as a blood which had done nothing for them.

On these scriptural premises it is impossible to doubt that many whom the Lord has bought will reject his redemption, and bring swift destruction upon themselves.

II. Though the perdition of the rejecters of the gospel be a grievous and a distressing fact, it reflects no dishonor on the atonement itself.

1. Such results are constantly taking place in all the other provisions of God's moral government without any dishonor on his arrangement. In providence, there are many things which appear to be, "in vain" and "of

none effect," as to a great number of mankind;—yet such failures are never regarded as a dishonor to providence; e. g. providence designs health, liberty, knowledge to all mankind, yet they are "of none effect" to many. After all, the diseases, the ignorance, and the barbarousness of nations are not to be laid to the blame and dishonor of providence, for providence has made every moral arrangement to prevent them. We have already seen, in some of the previous pages, that in various constitutions and dispensations of God, there have been similar failures, as in those of Eden and Sinai. Even the economy of heaven itself failed as to some of the angels who *failed* to keep their first estate. It is not, therefore, unexampled or unaccountable that the dispensation of the gospel should be liable to failure; and in such failure there is no dishonor which does not belong to the whole of the divine government.

2. The word of God never ascribes the perdition of sinners to any deficiency in the provisions of the atonement. None of the hearers of the gospel perish because the atonement was not sufficient for them,—or not intended for them. Freely and sincerely and pressingly they have been besought to "receive the atonement." The grand provisions of the atonement have been clearly and distinctly exhibited to them as "the things which BELONGED to THEIR peace,"—but they would not receive them.

3. The perdition of those who reject the atonement is their own personal, voluntary, and chosen act. They sin "wilfully." They voluntarily and perseveringly "reject the counsel of God against themselves." They are not influenced, constrained, or tempted by any divine attribute, by any secret decree, or by any doubtful and uncertain gospel. It is no disgrace to a Remedy that it does not cure those who persist in rejecting it. It is no dishonor to a Refuge that it does not defend those who refuse to enter it. And it is no dishonor to the atonement to be "of none effect" to those who reject its pardon, and seek to be justified by the works of the law.

4. The atonement will appear honorable and glorious, even in the destruction of those who reject it. The apostles' ministry was to God a sweet savor of Christ, even in them that perish, and so is the atonement itself. Its great and distinguished ends will have been answered, in the glory and the harmony of the divine perfections, in the eternal condemnation of sin, in the honor and safety of the divine government, in the "many crowns" of the Mediator, and in the salvation of countless millions of the human race. All holy and blessed intelligences will own and approve the justice of the condemnation of all the despisers of the way of salvation, and their punishment will be for ever, to the universe, an awful monument and example of the evil of sinning against God. In the fixing of the eternal state of the universe, all holy intelligences are represented as singing, "AMEN, ALLELUIA, WORTHY IS THE LAMB."

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE MORAL GRANDEUR OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

No one can rise from reading the New Testament without the conviction that the death of Jesus of Nazareth is the most prominent subject of it. The language of one of the apostles expresses the sentiments of all of them, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the CROSS of the Lord Jesus Christ." In the New Testament the ministry of the apostles is designated with marked emphasis, and bold peculiarity, "the preaching of the CROSS," that is, the report and promulgation of the death of Jesus Christ by crucifixion. They openly published the crucifixion of Christ as the most remarkable FACT in the history of God's government.

The CRUCIFIXION of Christ was of such offensive peculiarity that the enemies of the gospel had singled it out as being most notoriously prominent in infamy. It was the death of a criminal, of an odious traitor or a detestable impostor. It was the death of a SLAVE. It was the death, of all others, held by the Jews as alone cursed—cursed by the execrations of a contemptuous rabble, and cursed by the frowns and maledictions of heaven. The Jew and the Gentile alike viewed such a death with ineffable scorn, and with a contempt that thrilled the whole frame into rage. Nevertheless the apostles themselves placed this most offensive subject *first* and *foremost* in the topics of their ministry. They unflinchingly and calmly preached "Christ and him *crucified*," not Christ and him *glorified*, but Christ and HIM CRUCIFIED. They did not

take their standing on sunny spots in the history of their master, but they planted their banner in "the REPROACH of Christ," and invited to it the gaze and the scrutiny of the world. The accents of derision and taunt which jarred against their high and noble cause, were echoed back upon the world in tones of increased volume and power, till the ends of the earth caught the joyful sound.

Let us accompany the apostle Paul when about to soar into the bright effulgence of this glorious subject, and when about to train the vision of the young offspring of his ministry to sustain the splendors of the "marvellous light." What an array of means he presents to them as necessary to the process of training them for his high contemplation! He first bows his knees unto the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant them, according to the RICHES of his glory, to be *strengthened* with *might*, by his *spirit*, in the *inner-man*, that *Christ* might *dwell* in them by *faith*, that they might be *rooted* and *grounded* in *love*. And what is all this preparatory training and mustering of energies for?—"That they might be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the *breadth*, and *length*, and *depth* and *height*, and to know the *love of Christ* which passeth knowledge." Oh! for an angel's wing and an angel's vision to survey this vast and stupendous theme, whose breadth takes in every intelligence and every interest, whose length reaches from everlasting to everlasting, whose depth fathoms the lowest state of depravity and misery, and whose height throws floods of glory on the throne and the crown of Jehovah.

Then, there must be something of infinite worth, dignity and grandeur in the love and the death of Jesus Christ above all others. If the Lord Jesus were only a saint, a divine messenger, or a holy martyr, what is there in his love or his death above any other. Imagine for a moment all this apparatus of means and training instituted to contemplate the death of Moses or

Isaiah, or John the Baptist, and into what *sesquipedalia verba*, will these elevated words of truth and soberness dwindle. Why should it be a stumbling block to the Jews, or an offence to the Greeks, that Christ died, any more than the fact that John the Baptist died or that Socrates died? Did the apostles preach that Christ died a martyr to his message? And did not John the Baptist and Socrates die so? The entire structure of the New Testament is founded on the fact that the apostles solemnly announce the death of Christ to be a stupendous EXPEDIENT of infinite wisdom for saving sinners with honor to the divine government, they proclaimed the crucifixion of Christ to be a lustration, a propitiation for the sins of the world. They went forth "determining to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Hear their frank and manly confession:—"The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but WE preach CHRIST CRUCIFIED unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the *power* of God, and Christ the *wisdom* of God." 1 Cor. i, 22—24.

A ministry that rejected the atonement would never have used the language of the apostles. Never were a band of men so enraptured with their subject, and never was there a subject so calculated to enchant the mind or ravish the affections of the heart.

1. The atonement gives us the most enlarged views of the person of the Son of God. The scriptures avow that "great is the mystery of Godliness, *God manifest in the flesh.*" The person of Jesus Christ is unique in the universe—unparalleled in the forms and tribes of being. All forms and grades of existence meet in Him. In Him the Godhead lives in union with rational life. His character is not that of his NATURE. His character is moral and official; yet his nature as God and as man is pure, unmixed, and individual. His character and person once passed through a process of accountableness, trial, and discipline, and now sus-

tain the official employments of Mediator, Intercessor, and Savior. Yet he is God over all, blessed for ever. He well deserves the name "Wonderful." His person was constituted for his work and office, and, but for the atonement, such a personage would not have been presented to the notice, the admiration, and homage of the universe. Divest this personage of his atoning office, and he is "WONDERFUL" no longer.

2. The atonement has fixed an eternal stigma on SIN. The destruction of fallen angels, the expulsion of our first parents from Eden, the devastations of the flood, &c., were but hints of God's aversion to sin. The notice which God took of sin in the death of his Son is the most marked and the most signal. For the offended to call in the mediation of a third party—that third party to be a person of high worth and dignity—and that exalted person to transact the affair of the reconciliation publicly before a whole community—is a demonstration that the offence is regarded as of high criminality and demerit. This is, indeed, the secret of men's opposition to the atonement—it makes too much of what they call human frailties and foibles—but what God calls crime and treason. Every thing in the atonement is against sin;—there is nothing in it to extenuate sin. They who see most evil in sin, see most worth and grandeur in the atonement, and they who most love and admire the atonement most hate and abhor sin.

3. The atonement is the most splendid and magnificient vindication of the honor of divine government. All the judgments with which God has visited this world are vindications of his government; they have shewn on what side God is,—they have proved that sin cannot be traced to him—they have signified that God will at all hazards defend his law; but the atonement of his Son is the most amazing of all his measures. The annals of his empire present nothing like it. It is so magnificent that angels look to it with admiration. When the Mediator finished this vindication, the physical universe did it homage, and mantled in sackcloth, bowed

to the greater miracle of moral government, an *atonement for sin.*

4. The atonement brings a greater revenue of glory to God than any other measure. This dispensation eclipses the renown of all the others. In other measures we see but portions of the ways of God. Here we behold *all* the perfections of God in transcendent lustre, and beautiful harmony. There is a greater display of *public justice* in the death of the cross, than in all judicial inflictions. There is more *goodness* in the salvation of *one* fallen sinner, than in the confirmation of thousands of holy angels. The equity of the divine government shines with brighter honors in the scheme of sovereign grace, than in the dispensations of Paradise. Besides, here, and *here* alone, is a standing for *mercy;* here alone she unfurls her ensigns of peace, and sways her sceptre at once to vindicate the throne, and save the sinner. The attributes, whose honor seemed to require the destruction of sinners are glorified in his salvation, yea, more glorified in his salvation than they would have been in his perdition.

5. The atonement brings an immense accession of good to the universe. What a universe of death would this have been, if all the evils due to sinners actually took place! But God has thoughts of peace, and not of evil towards us. "For if God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us ALL things." He gave his Son as the magazine and repository of all fulness of blessings. Here are all sorts of good that man is capable of, or can possibly need,—good to the highest degree, "far above all that we are able to ask or think,"—good distributed with the freest bounty and copiousness for wants in all conditions—good for eternity for an immortal spirit. All this good comes through the atonement of Jesus Christ. The cross received the thunder from the threatening cloud, and gave sunshine to the universe.

6. The atonement excites interest in the remotest parts of the universe. Angels desire to look into it.

Philosophers have studied and admired *gravitation*, and have almost adored the *principle* that keeps in harmony, innumerable myriads of worlds in the remotest regions of space, to which imagination can push. But what is this, compared with the principle and arrangement that makes known unto principalities and powers in heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God, and preserves the order and happiness of countless intelligences? This as infinitely transcends the other, as influence over MIND, surpasses in dignity and grandeur, influence over matter.

7. The atonement takes for the accomplishment of its designs a vast circuit of dispensation. Its goings forth have been from eternity. The world was created a theatre for its scenes. The machinery of providence was constructed to introduce its operations. The Mosaic law was the schoolmaster of its first principles, and the Jewish temple with all its furniture was but a scaffold for its building of mercy. Four thousand years were employed to summon attention to its designs. After time has perished, the results of the atonement, like the circle produced in a peaceful lake, will be widening, and perpetually widening, through the length and breadth of a shoreless eternity.

8. The atonement supplies a stupendous system of motives to bear on the interests of the universe. The epistles of the New Testament bring these motives to bear upon our duties towards God, towards Christ, towards the world, and towards each other in our relative capacities. There are no motives like these to tell on the heart, and to produce repentance towards God. The atonement "speaks better things" than any other measure for the interests of holiness and truth. A ministry without the motives of the atonement is a ministry in which the "blood of sprinkling" is hushed and mute. A world in which were hushed the music of the groves, the cadences of murmuring streams, and the dulcet sounds of love and friendship, were but a faint emblem of the sepulchral dulness of such a ministry. It is when

the atonement "speaketh better things," that the gospel is the *power of God* unto salvation.

9. The atonement is the medium of the most glorious change in the character and the prospects of sinners. "Behold what manner of love is this that WE should be called the sons of God." In this medium the sinner can meet "the consuming fire" without being destroyed. It is a refuge accessible, designed, and sufficient for every sinner. To what honor will God exalt believers, when even this glorious Mediator will come to be GLORIFIED in his saints! Think what they were when he came to seek and to find them—and think what he has made of them by his blood and Spirit—and you will approve of their having no song in heaven but "WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN FOR US."

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